

HOMELESS AT HOME
A Public Project
Summary
Design Packages I and II

Design Packages I and II

Design Packages I and II are distributed to participants in the project to assist them in understanding the problem of homelessness and to provide them with information not readily accessible to them.

Design Package I included the following:

Letter of Introduction by Glenn Weiss and Kyong Park. One page.

Critical commentary in response to Harvard's Exhibition, "Making Shelter" by White-Meadow. One page.

Instructions to participants for their writings to be used in Design Package II by Glenn Weiss. One page.

Schedule by Glenn Weiss. One page.

"The Causes and Recent History of Homelessness" by Ellen Baxter and Kim Hopper, February 1984. Six pages.

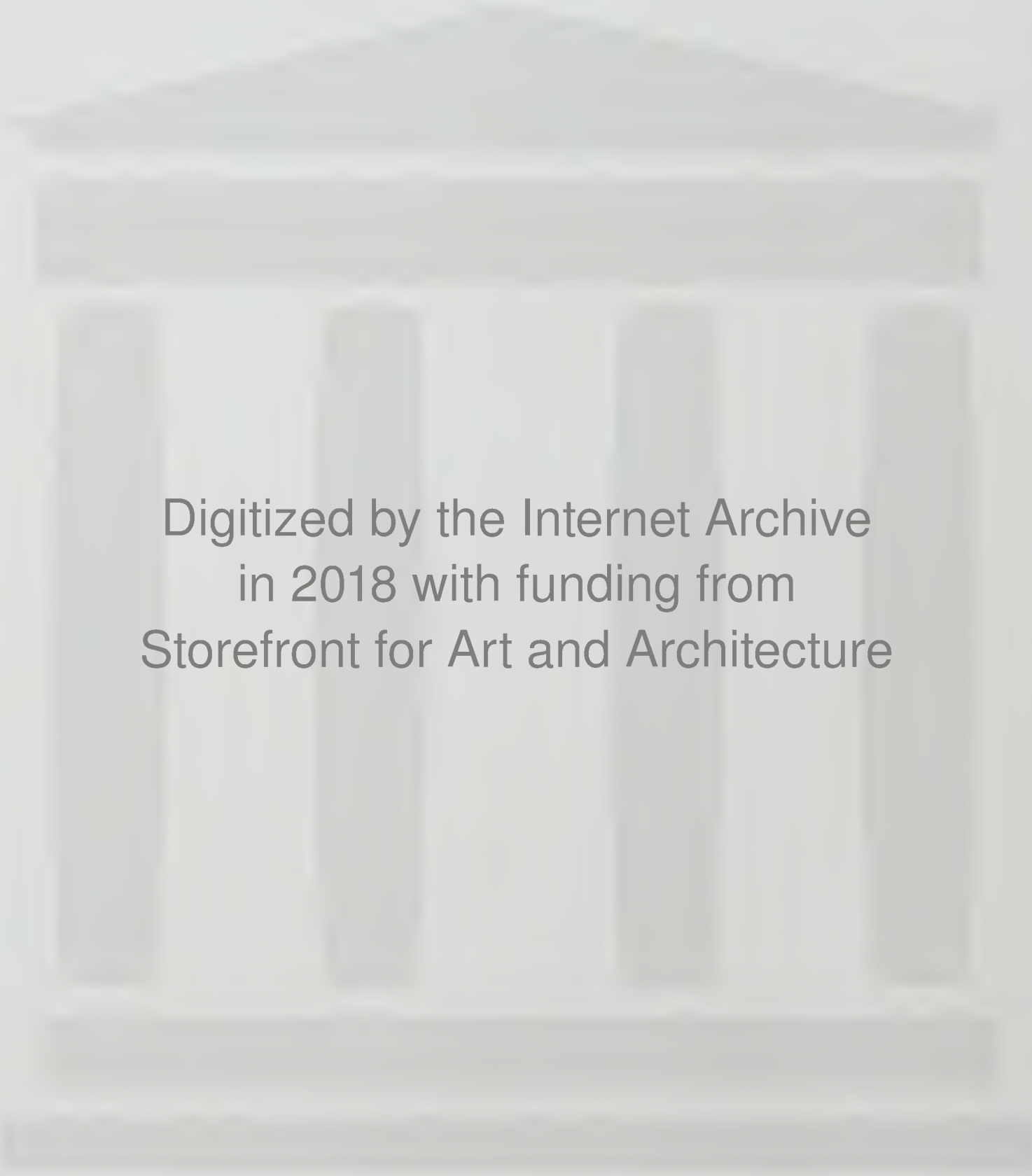
"Final Judgment by Consent of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, New York in a Class Action Suit Filed on Behalf of Homeless Men by Robert M. Hayes, Counsel for the National Coalition for the Homeless, December 15, 1982. Six pages.

"Testimony before the House Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs-Sub-Committee on Housing and Community Development, Washington, D. C. by Robert M. Hayes, Counsel for the National Coalition for the Homeless, December 15, 1982. Four pages.

Public Lives/Private Spaces: Homeless Adults in the Streets of New York by Kim Hopper and Ellen Baxter, Community Service Society, Institute for Social Welfare Research, New York, New York, February, 1981. 129 pages.

or

1933-1983: Never Again, A Report to the National Governors Association, Task Force on the Homeless by Mario M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, July, 1983. 85 pages.



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STOREFRONT

Art and Architecture

Kyong Park/Glenn Weiss 51 Prince, New York, NY 10012 212-431-5795

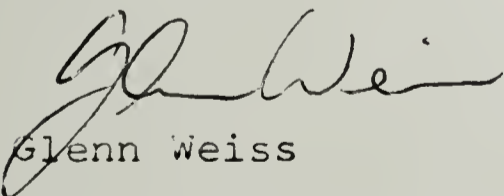
HOMELESS at HOME

Welcome to "Homeless at Home" & Thank you for promising to dedicate your skills, imagination and energy toward the beginnings of solutions to or understanding of the cultural complexity of homelessness.

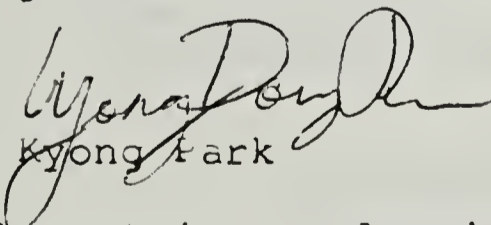
We ask that you read the enclosed material now. After or during digestion, please write back to STOREFRONT (by June 15) with project ideas you are considering, thoughts about the homeless and the home, and ways the exhibition could be improved. (Constructive criticism) Your thoughts will be included in Design Package II as a method of idea exchange between participants. Design Package II, mailed on July 1, will hopefully raise the level of understanding and quality of the final projects.

The exhibition will be divided into three parts: visionary proposals, existing and planned facilities that care for the homeless around the world, and positive portraits of homeless people set beside the worst existing reality for them. The visionary proposals, created by you, can provide for one person or many; for a day, a life time or a millennium. STOREFRONT's concern is that no matter what you envision, the project sincerely offers a good home, a way of life. STOREFRONT is not so much concerned with a "better" product like a large barrack shelter with newly added privacy screens, but rather that the envisioned whole shelter or small part, like the bed or communal dining table, are and symbolize a positive way of being human - create a home. (STOREFRONT acknowledges the paradox between the many different positive ways of human existence and the commonness of values and physical existence throughout 1st world culture) The exhibition, to have influence, must both provide ideas to be humane in the inhuman homeless circumstances and speak to the common values of heart and mind that establish the "Physical" Bill of Rights.

Thank you for participating.



Glenn Weiss



Kyong Park

PS Design Package II will contain sample sites. These sites are only suggestions and you are free to pick any location(s) on this earth for your proposal.

Schedule

April 1-- Design Package #1 (mailed)

- 1) Private Lives /Public Spaces --Hopper and Baxter
general survey of homeless people and their living conditions
- 2) Causes of Homelessness --Hopper and Baxter
brief survey of main factors contributing to Homelessness
- 3) Robert Hayes testimonies to congressional committees and
court order requiring the city of New York to provide shelter
to anyone who requests it.
- 4) Schedule of events for participants
- 5) cover letter

June 15-- Participants send project proposals and exhibition
comments to Storefront

- 1) Descriptions of projects individuals would like to pursue
- 2) Writings about Homelessness and Home (see sample letter to
invited writers)
- 3) Comments about exhibition as now organized and understood
(see sample of letter by White-Meadow)
- 4) The above information will shape the exhibition and design
package #2. Many of your comments and writings may be included
in design package #2

July 1-- Design package #2 (mailed)

Specific information about Homelessness and Exhibition

- 1) Writings by concerned architects and artists
- 2) Interviews with homeless people representing the following
categories:
 - a. mother with children
 - b. single man
 - c. single woman
 - d. elderly person
 - e. teenagers
 - f. drug addicted person
 - g. mentally ill person
 - h. a couple
- 3) Interviews with people who assist the homeless from the
above categories
- 4) Photographs of existing facilities
- 5) Possible locations in NYC for projects
- 6) Bibliography of other information

September 1-- Design Package #3

Information about Exhibition

- 1) where and when to bring completed projects
- 2) Recent developments in Homelessness
- 3) When and where to pick up posters for Exhibition

November 15-- Work due in New York

November 23-- Exhibition Opens

December 29-- Exhibition Closes

May 1, 1985

Making Shelter Exhibition
Harvard Architectural Review

Dear Editors:

Why did you bring Gropius down from the attic of Gund Hall? Did Laugier ever wish the homeless in his "humble hut" or only the noble ancestors of the upper class? Are the homeless the urban romantic nomads seeking a sturdier Sierra Club tent?

I am disturbed by the renovation of transient culture by sponsoring an exhibition about a place to spend one night. That is all we ever do - travel from one place to another seeking shelter. With our lamp, we look not for the honest man, but for the family, the neighborhood, the community, the tribe, the polis. The time has come to see the world as one place where each of us is provided with a permanent location, not for a night, but for a life time. We cannot tolerate a social and physical structure that jumps directly from the isolated "one" to 3.5 billion people. This structure is what is meant by "masses". We need the middle level crowds or groups; people and places where the history and future exist beyond the lifetime of any single person.

I thank you for including the homeless in your exhibition about making objects. It allowed me to see the mistakes we were about to make with the "Homeless at Home". I don't want our exhibition to be about a better made shelter or home, a direction that leads back to meaningless cycles of fashion and style. The way it is made is important, if like the Hungarian Architect, Imre Makovecz, the construction ties to other myths and legends that bring the past and future together at a permanent place. But I, too, like the beauty of the well made object and know the pleasure of reaction against empty post-modernism. Modern remains in the phrase post-modern because both movements put a-human ideas such as technology or product/style development ahead of new mythologies directed for humanness. Your emphasis upon the making, ie. the expression of construction and materials used in such a way to emphasize the tactile, will only lead to the trap of William Morris. As a true humanist/socialist, his handmade products ended-up as the prized possessions of the English upper class.

We are all empty and can feel the A-bombs circling overhead. Commercialism has removed the sacred and permanent from our world. The communal aspirations are demeaned to 2 percent shifts in the polls. (Why does the change from 51/49% to 49/51% mean a change of cultural attitudes?)

I hope you will respond to the above criticism in the issue of the Review dedicated to Making Shelter. The homeless represent and are a tragedy of a culture which has forgotten the reason we came together - to be more than one, to have a past and future beyond ourselves.

Sincerely,
White-Meadow

HOMELESS at HOME

To: writers of Design Package II

The Design Package II is intended to be the intellectual backbone of the "Homeless at Home" exhibition. The essays requested by STOREFRONT should deepen and extend the questions raised and/or answered by the artist/architect/designers both individually and collectively through the exhibition. Below lists a few samples of concepts that could be addressed.

1. Homes for the Homeless
2. Homelessness
3. Homefulness
4. The relationship between an institution providing for those who need help and the people helped. What freedoms are given-up to accept assistance?
5. The moral, economic, and political situation resulting from the general acceptance of a class of outcast citizens.
6. The relationship between the home and other life fulfilling activities like work in preserving humanness.
7. Physical Human Rights equal to the legal Bill of Rights.
8. The home as public, that is, the objects and spaces of common understanding and positive mythic symbols. This is opposed to truly private elements that are only understood by the makers or inhabitants.
9. The returned of shared physical settings and products among individuals in groups outside the biological family.
10. Public Art: Can the definition of public art be altered from Webster's definition #7, "Exposed to general view", to #2, "Being in service of community and mankind in general".
11. The loss of small scale support structure like family, neighborhood community, polis in a world of isolated 'ones' or the 3.5 billion 'many'.

Limits of Essays

1. Due at STOREFRONT on June 15
2. Format - Single spaced, 7 inches wide on 8½ by 11 paper.
3. Length - up to 2 pages(may include drawings or photos)
4. All essays should tie back to the physical, just as the artist/architect/designer will have to do.

Use of Design Package II essays

Sent to all participating artist/architect/designers.
Sent to selected press and serious thinkers on art, architecture, and culture.

Publication rights remain with the author and will not be used for any purposes, other than those above, without the written permission of the author.

STOREFRONT

Art and Architecture

Kyong Park/Glenn Weiss 51 Prince, New York, NY 10012 212-431-5795

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Sincerely,
White-Meadow

HOMELESS AT HOME
A Public Project
Chronology

- April, 1984 - Board of Directors of the Storefront begin discussion of the project.
- October, 1984 - First formal proposal completed. New York State Council of the Arts grants \$800 for the project.
- Winter, 1984 - Announcement of exhibition appears in national architectural magazines and several foreign ones. 500 inquiries received and information mailed.
- May, 1985 - 165 architects and artists register to enter exhibition. Design Package I (Written documentation and articles on homelessness) mailed to entrants.
- Summer, 1985 - Design Package II written and compiled by volunteers at Storefront. The 108-page publication mailed to entrants.
- August, 1985 - "Beneath the Face: Portraits of the Poor" by Nancy Miller Elliott. An exhibition of portraits of poor and homeless people in New York City held at the Storefront.
- October, 1985 - "Images and Words about Homelessness". An exhibition held at the Storefront of works by artists who created simple graphics dramatizing the problem of homelessness.
- Storefront organizes the submission of designs for shelters to the American Institute of Architects Conference on Housing the Homeless. Designs were exhibited at the AIA Headquarters in Washington, D. C.
- New York State Council of the Arts grants \$7,500 toward the project.
- November, 1985 - "Homeless, NYC". Performance artists create works about homelessness and the home. Presented at Quando in New York City to an audience of 200.
- 42nd Street, E.T.C. agrees to co-sponsor the project. Five-person working committee established to assist in securing sites for exhibition.

November and - Discussion Groups held with participants in
December, 1985 the project as well as others interested in
participating. Speakers from shelters as well
as homeless individuals informed the groups.
Video documentation of shelters and interviews
with homeless individuals presented.

March, 1986 - Planned exhibition of proposals for innovative
methods of providing home for the homeless
and/or investigations into the nature and
meaning of home. Proposals will be curated
and/or expanded for major exposition.

- Planned exhibition of proposals for images to
be used as public media (billboards, subway
signs, newspaper ads, etc.). Images are to be
expressive of the essential and symblic
qualities of home.

- Planned exposition to be held in a public
space. Its objective is to present to the
public comprehensive information about the
problem of homelessness as well as innovative
methods for providing home for the homeless
and/or investigations in the nature and
meaning of home. A one-day symposium will be
held during the last week of the exhibition to
discuss the impact of the exposition.

A series of four lectures and seminars will be
held concurrently with the exposition. The
Municipal Arts Society has agreed to
co-sponsor the seminars and lectures.

CAUSES AND RECENT HISTORY OF HOMELESSNESS

It must be some kind of experiment or something, to see how long people can survive without food, without shelter, without security.

Homeless woman,
Grand Central Station,
New York City, winter, 1980

Things at the bottom have changed and they have changed markedly. Not long ago, it was possible to dismiss skid rows in the country as little more than by-ways of human wreckage, seedy enclaves of the damaged, drunk or decrepit. After a marked surge during the Great Depression, such communities fell into decline and disrepute. The war effort culled all but the most aged or debilitated from such areas. As a result, urban planners in the late 1960s were making heady forecasts of the imminent demise of the entire genus, skid row. But several developments countered and then eclipsed such optimism in the late 1960s: women began appearing on the streets in growing numbers; they were joined in the mid-1970s by young, primarily minority men, who lacked marketable job skills; and the entire decade saw a steady influx of newly discharged psychiatric patients, casualties of a revolution in mental health care than never mobilized the necessary resources to complete the job begun when the hospitals were emptied. These have all been joined in the last two years by victims of the Great Recession and its federal administrative counterpart -- the Great Cutback. The "new" homeless are young, able-bodied men and women, the healthy and the not-so-sound, women and children fleeing abusive families, and -- with a frequency that surpasses all expectations -- whole families, families who have exhausted the entire gamut of resources and opportunities and who have no place left to turn.

The causes of contemporary homelessness are by now familiar ones (Cuomo, 1983; Hombs and Snyder, 1982; Sub-Committee on Housing and Community Development, 1983). We can sketch them rapidly:

1. Unemployment

Time was, one could get away with noting how unfairly the burden of joblessness fell, striking the young, poor and minorities with unerring regularity. One still sees this truth reflected in the public shelter statistics for New York City: the median age of these men is 34, they are overwhelmingly black or Hispanic, and fully 40 percent of longer-term (2 months or more) shelter residents report that the cause of their seeking shelter is loss of a job. Recently, however, unemployment has been falling in a widening circle. Everywhere one turns, the

ranks of the homeless are being joined by victims of job loss and their families. Among those states responding to a National Governors Association survey in May 1983, the median rate of increase in recorded unemployment over the past three years was 49 percent. This, of course, fails to take into account the vast army composed of discouraged workers, the underemployed, or those whose lack of skills prevent them from entering a tight labor market -- those, in short, who will, in all likelihood remain untouched by an "economic recovery."

2. The Scarcity of Low-Cost Housing

Over any recitation of the grim statistics on homelessness looms the shadow of a housing crisis which is unexampled in this century. Current estimates by the National Housing Law Project place the number of people who are involuntarily displaced from their homes each year at 2.5 million -- casualties of "revitalization" projects, eviction, economic development schemes and rent inflation. At the same time, half a million units of low-rent dwellings are lost each year through the combined forces of conversion, abandonment, inflation, arson, and demolition. When it is added that the major victims of mass displacement are the poor, those with fewest resources to absorb new hardship or to recover in its wake, it is no mystery that the ranks of the homeless continue to swell.

Those who manage to hold onto their housing are finding their grip becoming more and more tenuous. Throughout the 1970s, housing costs rose at a quicker pace than did inflation in general (Hartman, 1983). Nor was this disparity offset by rising household incomes. Real income either remained stagnant or declined during the decade. Combining the two trends: median monthly rents rose at twice the rate of average renter household income in the 1970s (Dolbeare, 1983). In brief, not only are shelter costs taking a bigger bite out of household income, but the size of that income is shrinking as well.

Desperately poor households in particular have been caught in the squeeze between declining income and rising rents. Between 1978 and 1980, median rents for all renters rose by 21 percent, but they increased by 30 percent for those households with incomes below \$3,000, half of whom paid more than 72 percent of their income for rent. This leaves \$71 each month for other needs. (By contrast, the same income group paid approximately 34 percent of their incomes for rent in 1970.) This very-low income group -- currently numbering 2.7 million households, or 10 percent of all renters -- is comprised primarily of female-headed, single-parent households (29%) and single individuals (49%) (mostly non-elderly), precisely those groups found in large measure among the homeless (Dolbeare, 1983).

Researchers in New York City have repeatedly encountered individuals for whom loss of housing was the immediate precipitating cause of their homelessness. Typically, this took

one of three forms: eviction or threat of eviction, intolerable conditions in one's prior residence, or rent increases that outstrip one's capacity to pay.

But these people are only the most extreme form of a type of housing distress that has become quite common. More and more folks are being pushed to the brink of having to choose between eating regularly and paying rent. Without some form of subsidy, many of these people will eventually wind up on the streets.

3. The Legacy of Deinstitutionalization

In 1973, as the first reports on the effects of deinstitutionalization began to appear, Robert Reich described the plight of ex-patients as "a national disgrace." Six years later, John Talbott simply added an adverb in updating the picture of chronically mentally disabled: "still a national disgrace." Despite the notable achievements of a number of federal demonstration projects, few observers would disagree that the dismal situation persists.

Among the casualties of deinstitutionalization, none have received greater attention than those who now make their homes on city thoroughfares. Few indeed are the city avenues that are innocent of the presence of obviously disturbed street dwellers. And while in no way can the whole story of contemporary homelessness be laid at the door of mental health policy-makers, it is generally agreed that at least a third of the men and women in public shelters in New York and elsewhere have histories of psychiatric hospitalization. Many are desperately in need of care -- though by no means necessarily in an institution. The effects of severe deprivation on one's physical and mental health should be obvious. The symptoms of those with mental disabilities are easily exacerbated on the streets, often taking on a character that is frightening -- and further isolating -- to the homeless themselves.

4. The Federal Administration's Default on Entitlements

Presiding over this wreckage is a federal administration which has turned lack of concern into a perverse virtue, the hallmark of whose policies toward the poor is whimsy, if not mere anarchy. Case in point: disability cutoffs.

In the past year and a half, intensified review procedures, initiated at the federal level, of disability aid recipients has resulted in many qualified claimants losing their benefits. The Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report estimated in September that as many as 158,000 persons have been taken off the rolls since the stepped-up reviews got under way. (By June 7, 1983, that number has risen to more than 350,000, and by December, it was nearly half a million New York Times, 6/8/83; 12/4/83). Anecdotal evidence from seven different regions, collected by the Mental Health Law Project, indicates that most often the loss of benefits is due to a severely checked ability on the part of the

recipient to challenge the ruling -- and not to a legitimate winnowing from relief rolls of those who have recovered. Equally noteworthy, mental disability is overrepresented in successful review cases (those that are discontinued) by a factor of three: roughly 11 percent of all disability checks go to the mentally disabled, but nearly a third of the discontinued cases are psychiatrically impaired (New York Times, 5/9/82).

* * * * *

In September 1983, the National Coalition for the Homeless contacted dozens of soup kitchens and shelter workers across the country, to inquire about the effects of the newly detected "economic recovery" on demand for their services. The results of this inquiry and a brief commentary were released in November (National Coalition for the Homeless, 1983). The report makes tedious reading. Over and over again, the same tale is told: There has been no reduction in requests for assistance; if anything, distress is deepening and the evidence for its dislocations mounting. Part of the problem is that indicators of recovery -- such as the rate of growth in the GNP, or decline in the unemployment rate -- bear little immediate relevance to people whose lives and toil do not figure in such computations as the total value of goods and services produced. Individuals on general assistance, families receiving welfare benefits, the permanently impaired collecting disability relief, those out of work who have exhausted their unemployment benefits and whose skills are obsolete or nonexistent -- none of these groups are likely to re-enter a newly revived free market.

Measurement problems also abound. Unemployment rates do not register those whose need has outlived the duration of relief for which they are eligible, nor do they include discouraged workers, the under-employed, or those who have never held steady jobs. A Brookings Institute study found that only 45 percent of newly laid off workers applied for benefits in 1982, compared with over three-quarters in the last recession (New York Times, September 9, 1983). At the same time, premature hailing of a recovery around the corner ignores countervailing trends: the enormous upsurge in appeals to soup kitchens and food banks requested across the nation (New York Times, December 19, 1983); the 7 percent increase in New York City welfare rolls from July 1982 to October 1983, reversing a ten year trend of steady decline (New York Times, December 17, 1983); the diminishing supply of low-income housing and continued displacement of the poor; the accumulating evidence for a rising incidence of people making do in what are, at best, makeshift living arrangements -- the re-emergence, in short, of the unmistakable exigencies of widespread poverty.

All too common, it appears, are examples of mean-spirited efforts to deny that this is a problem at all. Two particularly noisome examples may suffice: A little over a year ago, a Fort Lauderdale City Council member advised spraying all trash receptacles with kerosene or rat poison to discourage foraging.

The way to get rid of vermin, he explained, is to cut off their food supply. And, for the past two years the city of Phoenix has been engaged in what has been described as an "extermination" program vis-a-vis the homeless poor. Shelters and soup kitchens have been shut down or dispersed to the outer edges of the city; sleeping on public property (e.g., under road bridges) is now on the books as a misdemeanor; and all trash has been declared property of the city, subjecting scavengers to the threat of a fine or jail for "stealing public property." A recently mobilized downtown citizens' group has vowed to "take Phoenix back from the derelicts" and is seeking to outlaw begging and foraging for food as well. The message is clear: what offends the eye and threatens commerce, let it be sequestered and confined.

What do these trends mean for the prospects of homelessness? Predictions are hazardous, not least because of the uncertainties which attach to all of the forces currently responsible for homelessness. But if present signs are at all reliable, a number of likely effects can be proposed:

1. First and foremost, the numbers will continue to burgeon and diversify; there is simply, to date, no indication that the tide is abating.
2. As the influx of the young, able-bodied sound-minded grows, some communities are seeing a sort of unnatural selection process take effect in public shelters. The more resilient and resourceful of the new homeless are displacing the more disabled, elderly and fearful. As a result, those most in need of a protective environment are often consigned to the streets or to private shelters invariably operating well beyond capacity.
3. Emergency shelter becomes permanent quarters -- by default if not design -- and the deterrent spectre of this lowest form of public relief takes on a farcical character. Recall that the threat of skid row has always served a disciplinary function with respect to the working poor, representing the low of those who lack the fortitude, stamina, or responsibility to hold a job. Skid row was the embodiment of that modality of disgrace attendant upon the refusal to work. (Dispensations were granted -- though by no means consistently or easily -- to those whose failure to work was the result of an inability, rather than an unwillingness, to do so.) Once on skid row, the threat became both a punishment and a harsh lesson in rehabilitation: the hardship and humiliation were expected, in part at least, to serve as prods, propelling those who could, to return to ordered society. But what good does it do one -- even supposing one is in need of it -- to rehabilitate oneself if, once physically and morally retooled, there are no jobs, there is no housing, there is nothing but the same dreary round of "two hots and a cot?"
4. Where length of stay restrictions are in effect, protective shelter becomes an accomplice in the cycle of domestic violence, as provisional sanctuary gives way to forced return to

intolerable family situations. In statewide hearings in both New York and Massachusetts, the story was told repeatedly: where temporary shelter is a dead end because of the unavailability of decent affordable housing, and time limits are imposed on those seeking refuge, women and their children have no option but to return to the abusive homes that were the cause of their seeking shelter in the first place.

5. Finally, we would hazard to say that in the lower strata of society a swell of discontent and demoralization is building in this country the equal of which has not been seen for fifty years. Nor, again, is economic recovery likely to create jobs for people whose skills are years obsolete. Suffering is never a question of mere numbers; it is a matter of the detailed specifics that make up the day-to-day routine of privation and debasement.

Ellen Baxter, Kim Hopper,
February, 1984

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY COURT OF NEW YORK

----- X
:
ROBERT CALLAHAN, CLAYTON W. FOX, :
THOMAS DAMIAN ROIG, JAMES HAYES, :
JAMES SPELLMAN and PAUL E. TOOLE, :
on their own behalves and on behalf :
of all others similarly situated, :
Plaintiffs, : Index No.:
: 42582/79
-against- :
: FINAL
HUGH L. CAREY, as Governor of the State of : JUDGMENT
New York, BARBARA BLUM, as Commissioner of : BY CONSENT
the New York State Dept. fo Social Services, :
EDWARD I. KOCH, as Mayor of the City of New :
York, JAMES A. KRAUSKOPF, as Commissioner of :
the New York City Human Resources Administr- :
ation, and CALVIN REID, as Director of the :
Shelter Care Center for Men. :
Defendants. :
: X

Plaintiffs Robert Callahan, Clayton Fox and Thomas Roig, having brought this action on October 2, 1979 challenging the sufficiency and quality of shelter for homeless men in New York City, and plaintiffs Callahan, Fox, Roig, James Hayes James Spellman and Paul Toole, having filed their Amended Complaint on March 31, 1980, and defendants Hugh L. Carey, as Governor of the State of New York, and Barbara Blum, as Commissioner of the State of New York Department of Social Services (the "State defendants"), having filed their Amended Answer on January 19, 1981 therein denying the material allegations of the Amended Complaint, and defendants Edward Koch, as Mayor of the City of New York, Stanley Brezenoff, as Administrator of the New York City Human Resources Administration, and Calvin Reid, as director of the Shelter Care Center for Men (the "Men's Shelter") (the "City defendants"), having filed their Amended Answer on January 19, 1982 therein denying the material allegations of the Amended Complaint, and plaintiffs and defendants by their respective attorneys, having consented to the entry of this Final Judgment without any final adjudication of any issue of fact or law herein and without this Final Judgment constituting any evidence or admission by any party hereto with respect to any such issue:
NOW, therefore, without final adjudication of any issue of fact or law herein and without this Final Judgment constituting any evidence or admission by any party hereto with respect to any issue, and upon consent of all parties, it is hereby

ORDERED, ADJUDGED and DECREED as follows:

Provision of Shelter

1. The City defendants shall provide shelter and board to each homeless man who applies for it provided that (a) the man meets the need standard to qualify for the home relief program established in New York State; or (b) the man by reason of physical, mental or social dysfunction is in need of temporary shelter.

Shelter Standards

2. The City defendants shall provide shelter at facilities operated in accordance with the standards set forth in this paragraph as soon as practicable and not later than September 1, 1981. The term "shelter facility" refers to the Keener Building, Camp LaGuardia, the Men's Shelter and any other facility used by the City defendants to shelter homeless men. This paragraph does not apply to the Bowery lodging houses (Palace, Kenton, Union, Sunshine, Delevan and Stevenson) presently used by the City Defendants to shelter homeless men (the "hotels"); if the City defendants choose to shelter homeless men in any additional Bowery lodging house, they will advise counsel for the plaintiffs and a good faith effort shall be made by plaintiffs and the City defendants to agree to operating standards for such facilities

(a) Each resident shall receive a bed of a minimum of 30 inches in width, substantially constructed, in good repair and equipped with clean springs.

(b) Each bed shall be equipped with both a clean, comfortable, well-constructed mattress standard in size for the bed and a clean, comfortable pillow of average size.

(c) Each resident shall receive two clean sheets, a clean blanket, a clean pillow case, a clean towel, soap and toilet tissue. A complete change of bed linens and towels will be made for each new resident and at least once a week and more often as needed on an individual basis.

(d) Each resident shall receive a lockable storage unit.

(e) Laundry services shall be available to each resident not less than twice a week.

(f) A staff attendant to resident ratio of at least two percent shall be maintained in each shelter facility at all times.

(g) A staff attendant trained in first aid shall be on duty in each shelter facility at all times.

(h) A minimum of ten hours per week of group recreation shall be available for each resident at each shelter facility.

(i) Residents shall be permitted to leave and to return to shelter facilities at reasonable hours and without hinderance.

(j) Residents of shelter facilities shall be provided transportation (public or private) to enable them to return to the site where they applied for shelter.

(k) Residents of shelter facilities shall be permitted to recieve and send mail and other correspondence without interception or interference.

(l) Residents of shelter facilities shall be permitted to leave the facility by 7:00 a.m. if they so desire.

(m) The City defendants shall make a good faith effort to provide pay telephones for use by the residents at each shelter facility. The City defendants shall bear any reasonable cost for the installation and maintenance of such telephones.

3. The capacity of shelter facilities shall be determined as follows:

(a) The capacity of newly constructed shelter facilities shall comply with the standards set forth in Appendix A, except in cases of emergency need as defined in Appendix B.

(b) The City defendants shall disclose to plaintiffs' counsel any plan to convert an existing structure to a shelter facility and the intended capacity for that facility at least 30 days in advance of the implementation or execution of any such conversion plan. A reasonable capacity for each such facility shall be established. The standards set forth in Appendix A shall be used as guidelines in determining whether the planned capacity of the City defendants is reasonable.

(c) Effective December 31, 1981, the capacity of the Keener Building shall not exceed ____ except in cases of emergency need as defined in Appendix B, in which case the maximum number of men who may be sheltered in the Keener Building is _____. Between the date of entry of this judgment and December 31, 1981, the capacity of the Keener Building shall not exceed _____.

(d) The capacity of Camp LaGuardia shall comply -- by construction of new dormitory buildings -- with the standards set forth in Appendix A, except in cases of emergency need as defined in Appendix B, as soon as practicable and not later than December 31, 1982, except that the individual rooms in the "Main Building" may be used as sleeping rooms for one person each. The construction start of such new dormitory buildings shall occur no later than March 1, 1982.

Bowery Lodging Houses

4. Hotels presently used by the City defendants shall meet the following standards at the time of entry of this judgment and the City defendants shall maintain such standards thereafter:

(a) Each resident shall receive a bed, a clean mattress, two clean sheets, one clean blanket, one clean pillow and one clean pillow case. A complete change of bed linens (sheets and pillow case) shall be made for each new resident and at least once a week and more often as needed on an individual basis.

(b) Each resident shall be supplied with a clean towel, soap and toilet tissue. A clean towel shall be provided to each new resident and towels shall be changed at least once a week and more often as needed on an individual basis.

(c) There shall be two trained security guards in the Palace Hotel between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m. and one trained security guard between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., and 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. These security guards shall file with the City defendants incident reports on any incidents of violence or attempted violence occurring in the hotels.

(d) Showers shall be available at the Men's Shelter beginning at 7 a.m. and signs advising hotel residents of the fact shall be posted at the front desk in each hotel and at the door of each bathroom in each hotel. Persons showering at the Men's Shelter shall be provided adequate supervision (including safeguarding of personal property), a clean towel, soap and, if requested, a delousing agent.

(e) A lockable storage unit of adequate size to store personal property shall be available either at the Men's Shelter or at the hotels for each man sheltered by the City defendants at hotels.

(f) Heat shall be maintained in accordance with New York City guidelines for rental residences.

(g) Cleanliness shall be maintained throughout the hotels at all times.

Intake Centers

5. The City defendants shall accept applications for shelter at the Men's Shelter, 8 East Third Street, New York, New York, and at 529 Eighth Avenue, New York, New York (the "central intake centers"). Applications for shelter shall be accepted at all times at the Men's Shelter, and applications for shelter shall be accepted at 529 Eighth Avenue between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 1:00 a.m., seven days per week. The City defendants shall provide direct transportation to shelter facilities from the central intake centers to all homeless men for whom the City defendants must provide shelter pursuant to paragraph 1, supra. The 529 Eighth Avenue intake center, shall be opened as a central intake not later than September 1, 1981.

6. The City defendants shall operate additional satellite intake centers on a 24-hour basis Monday through Friday at the following locations:

- (a) Harlem Hospital Center, 506 Lenox Avenue, New York, New York;
- (b) Kings County Hospital Center, 451 Clarkson Avenue, Brooklyn, New York;
- (c) Lincoln Hospital, 234 East 149th Street, Bronx, New York; and
- (d) Queens Hospital Center, 82-68 164th Street, Jamaica, New York.

Men seeking shelter at the satellite intake centers shall be provided adequate fare for public transportation and clear written directions to either (i) a shelter facility, or (ii) a central intake center -- according to the preference of the persons seeking shelter. The City defendants shall provide direct transportation from the satellite intake centers to a shelter facility to all men who appear so physically or mentally disabled that they are unable to reach a shelter facility by public transportation. Satellite intake centers shall be opened not later than September 1, 1981. It is understood that the above satellite intake centers shall be operated in conjunction with borough crisis centers. In the event that the borough crisis center program is terminated, the City defendants may, in their discretion, reduce the hours of operation of the satellite intake centers to between 5 p.m. and 1 a.m.

7. The City defendants shall accept applications for shelter facilities providing that such applicants have applied for and have been found eligible for shelter by the City defendants within six months of the time of application at a shelter facility. Shelter facilities shall also provide shelter for one night to any person who has not previously applied for shelter who seeks shelter at a shelter facility after 8:00 p.m.

Community Participation

8. Each shelter facility, central intake center and satellite intake center, shall utilize the services of available community members to the maximum reasonable event. These persons are not City employees or volunteers in a City sponsored program within the meaning of section 50 (k) of the General Municipal Law and such persons shall execute statements to this effect.

Information

9. The City defendants shall provide applicants for shelter with clear written information concerning other public assistance benefits to which they may be entitled at the time applicants apply for shelter.

Compliance Monitoring

10. Defendant Krauskopf shall appoint qualified employees with no administrative responsibility for providing shelter to monitor defendants' shelter care program for men with respect to compliance with this decree. These employees shall visit each shelter facility, central intake center, satellite intake center and hotel at least twice a month and will submit to defendant Krauskopf a written report at least twice a month describing compliance or lack thereof with each provision of this decree. These reports shall be made available to plaintiffs' counsel upon reasonable notice.

11. Plaintiffs' representatives shall have full access to all shelter facilities central intake centers and satellite intake centers, and plaintiffs' counsel shall be provided access to any records relevant to the enforcement and monitoring of this decree.

12. Defendant Krauskopf shall deliver by hand each day to plaintiffs' counsel a statement listing:

- (a) the number of men who applied for shelter at each central intake center and at each satellite intake center;
- (b) the number of men who were provided shelter at each shelter facility or hotel;
- (c) the number of men who were denied shelter at each shelter facility, central intake center and satellite intake center and the reason for each such denial;
- (d) the number of men who were accepted for shelter at each central intake and satellite intake center who did not reach a shelter facility; and
- (e) the number of men who were provided direct transportation from each satellite intake center to a shelter facility.

13. It is the intention of defendant Krauskopf to conduct daily inspections of the Palace Hotel and to deliver reports of such inspections each day to plaintiffs. It is also the intention of defendant Krauskopf to conduct inspections of the other hotels used by defendants to shelter homeless men not less than three times per week and to deliver reports of such inspections not less than three times a week to plaintiffs' counsel. A sample of the inspection report form to be used is attached hereto as Exhibit C.

No Waivers

14. Nothing in this judgment permits any person, not-for-profit corporation, charitable organization, or governmental entity or subdivision to operate a shelter as defined in New York Code of Rules and Regulations, Title 18, S 485.2(c), in violation of the requirements of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations, or any other applicable law.

15. Nothing in this judgment should operate or be construed as res judicata or collateral estoppel so as to foreclose any signatory party from any claim or defense in any subsequent administrative or judicial proceeding.

16. Nothing in this judgment shall be deemed to authorize or to prevent the operation by the New York City Human Resources Administration of the Keener

Building on Wards Island as a shelter or shelter facility after October 15, 1981, except in accord with a valid contract or agreement among the New York State Department of Social Services, the New York State Office of Mental Health and the New York City Human Resources Agency and with an operating certificate issued by the New York State Department of Social Services.

17. The Commissioner of the New York State Department of Social Services agrees to reimburse the New York City Human Resources Agency for the operation of a shelter facility or shelter facilities referred to in this judgment pursuant to New York Social Services Law S 153, except if such shelter facility fails to comply with the requirements for shelters contained in the New York Social Services Law or the New York Code of Rules and Regulations, Title 18; provided that nothing in this judgment can or does obligate the Legislature of the State of New York to appropriate funds.

18. Nothing in this judgment shall prevent, limit or otherwise interfere with the authority of the Commissioner of the New York State Department of Social Services to enforce and carry out her duties under the New York Social Services Law, Title 18, of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations, or any other applicable law.

Continuing Jurisdiction

19. Jurisdiction is retained by this Court for the purpose of enabling any of the parties to this Final Judgment to apply to this Court at any time for such further orders and directions as may be necessary or appropriate for the construction, modification, or termination of this entire judgment or of any applicable provisions thereof, for the enforcement or compliance therewith, and for the punishment of violations thereof.

Dated: New York, New York
August ,1981

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By: _____
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So ordered: _____
J.S.C.

COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

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Testimony of

ROBERT M. HAYES

Counsel, National Coalition for the Homeless

Before the

House Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development

December 15, 1982

Washington, D.C.

My name is Robert M. Hayes and I am counsel to the National Coalition for the Homeless. The Coalition is a nine-month old organization linked by a coordinating committee representing 40 cities and regions throughout the United States. The common element binding the National Coalition for the Homeless is simple: a commitment to the principle that decent shelter is a fundamental right in any civilized society.

At the outset, it must be made clear that although they are poor, sometimes sick, and largely defenseless, the homeless do not come before this committee pleading for mercy. They do not come as mere beggars, waiting for the crumbs to fall from the banquet table of the richest government on earth.

No, America's homeless have not come today to Washington on their knees. They come as aggrieved and angry citizens seeking the redress of wrongs. And the homeless do not come before this subcommittee unarmed. For their demands are demands of justice, demands appealing to simple human decency. The homeless come here with the power of an increasingly aroused public conscience, a public conscience which is finding ever more unacceptable a social order and a government which are willing to consign the very poor of America to the streets of our cities.

Mr. Chairman, you already have heard of the dimensions of homelessness and the factors dispossessing growing numbers of our people. I will not repeat them. But I have seen the homeless in cities in this country, large and small, east and west. The homeless are in America's heartland; they are in the sunbelt; they are in the snowbelt. It is fair to say that without concerted governmental action soon, there will be United States cities teeming with hundreds of thousands of what in India are referred to as "pavement dwellers". Inaction, Mr. Chairman, is all that is necessary to create, coast to coast, dozens of Calcuttas in this country.

The homeless need disaster relief. They do not need sympathy. The homeless need housing. They do not need statements of support. The homeless need jobs. They do not need good intentions.

On behalf of the National Coalition for the Homeless, I will highlight very briefly some of the needed legislative initiatives which could herald the advent of a responsible federal response to homelessness. These proposals, if enacted, would materially address the survival needs of what has been estimated to be up to two million homeless Americans. In the case of the homeless, even piece meal reform has its place. For each effort, however modest, preserves human life; each effort alleviates at least some of the wretched suffering of the poorest of our poor.

I. DISASTER RELIEF

First and foremost, there is a compelling need for the federal government to recognize homelessness as the national crisis that it now is, and to respond appropriately: with emergency relief. If but one percent of the number of people now homeless in America were displaced by an earthquake, or a hurricane or some other natural calamity, a disaster would be declared, the National Guard would be mobilized and massive relief efforts would be under way. In the face of a calamity far greater, our government sleeps.

Representative Vento's legislation to make immediately available \$50 million in emergency relief to assist charitable agencies feed the hungry and shelter the homeless is a first step -- an admittedly small, but material emergency response by the Congress. That relief must be appropriated. No serious official -- whether in the legislative or the executive branch -- may dare utter the term "safety net" and reject this emergency lifeline.

But that minor appropriation should be accompanied by a Congressional resolution acknowledging what this Subcommittee has already described as an "unprecedented increase in the number of unemployed and homeless individuals and families" who need a "safe place to sleep".

The Congress should, I submit, resolve that appropriate federal buildings, across the country, be made available to state and local governments, and to charitable and religious groups, for emergency night-time shelters this winter. It has been done by churches. It has been done in schools. The available resources of this government -- be they post offices, military installations or federal buildings -- can be put to use as they were intended: to serve the people. And, in this case, to save human lives.

II. THE RIGHT TO SHELTER

Second, in these hard times, it is appropriate to consider whether there should be a right to shelter for the people of this country. Historically, hard times produce reform. With the pervasiveness of homelessness in the United States today, a growing constituency of concerned and compassionate Americans is emerging to demand enactment of a right to shelter.

On a state by state level, there already is authority for the establishment of a right to shelter. The New York Supreme Court recognized such a right in 1979. That case can be and, if need be, will be argued elsewhere. I can hear murmurs of misgiving, reminders of what we are all content to call the "political climate" in 1983. In response, I ask simply: how much human suffering, and how many human lives, will it take to move our federal government?

In 1977 the British Parliament enacted the Homeless Persons Act, guaranteeing the right to shelter for the homeless, or those imminently threatened by homelessness. Not all of the homeless in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are guaranteed shelter under the Act. But those homeless persons who must be provided accommodations include: homeless families; persons rendered homeless by a "disaster"; vulnerable persons, including the elderly and the mentally and physically disabled; and pregnant women. Homeless persons not fitting any of these four categories are entitled to varying forms of assistance in finding accommodations on their own.

The notion of a right to shelter is hardly radical. Its scriptural antecedents go back to Amos, Isaiah and Matthew. It was not so long ago that this Congress adopted the national goal of "a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family". Under our federal system, there are models aplenty to enact a broad -- or narrow -- entitlement to shelter. The federal government has for decades participated with state and local governments in programs of income maintenance, medical assistance and disability insurance.

It is time now to legislate a federal right to shelter. It is time to consider a federal financial matching program, akin to the Social Security Act's emergency assistance to families program, to assist states and charitable agencies establish and operate emergency shelters and transitional residences for our citizens now condemned -- for no crime save poverty -- to the streets.

III. HOUSING

Third, I must remind you, quite bluntly, that the federal government's increasing abdication of its traditional role in creating low-income housing can only result in more massive homelessness in the years ahead. Essentially, homelessness today is a function of a housing market which no longer produces available and affordable housing for poor people. To the extent that the federal government participated in the production of low-income housing, the misery caused by this market failure was mitigated. Similarly, to the extent the federal government now walks away from that role, it must accept complicity for perpetuating such misery.

My friend Cushing Dolbeare of the National Low-Income Housing Coalition will describe in some detail just what I mean. The submitted testimony of the Coalition for the Homeless will supplement that. But remember, for each unit of public housing not produced next year, someone, somewhere will be homeless. For each lost unit of section 8 housing, there will be yet another homeless family. For the section 202 housing which will not be built, and for the Community Development Block Grant money which will not go to low-income housing, the number of people with nowhere to go, will increase.

IV. JOBS

At the same time, as the low-income housing market contracts, the ravages of unemployment make it all the more impossible for the jobless to compete for housing. The result: the newly unemployed -- after a short lag time -- are prime candidates to join the newly homeless.

Jobs, any jobs, will help. I know the talk of jobs this session is work on highways, work on the infrastructure. Such work obviously needs to be done. But it has been well - documented that among the most labor intensive public works activities is the construction and rehabilitation of housing. Nothing is more desperately needed in this country than the construction of housing. It is a neat fit, and one which must be pursued.

V. MENTAL HEALTH

The plight of the homeless mentally ill on our city streets may be the most poignant of all. The implementation of deinstitutionalization of mental health care is a national scandal. The mentally ill, once wards of state asylums, all too often wander the streets, rummaging through trash looking for food, their very survival left to chance.

I emphatically do not recommend a massive reinstitutionalization of the mentally ill. They can do quite well, living with dignity -- and with minimal disability and stigma -- in the community. But that requires support. And the most fundamental of supports is a place to live. Community mental health care that fails to meet the basic survival needs of the mentally ill is a farce.

Therapeutic efforts on behalf of the mentally ill are all but doomed to failure in the absence of decent housing. I submit that this committee should, at the minimum, look to earmark mental health funds for the most essential mental health need of all: housing.

VI. CONGRESSIONAL EDUCATION

Lastly, it is apparent that the Congress needs something most urban Americans have gained over the past several years: a first hand look at the homeless. In the gloomy landscape that surrounds this issue, one note of brightness consistently appears. When Americans from all walks of life see homelessness for what it is -- the absolute deprivation of survival resources for the very poor -- they are moved. and they are moved to action. Almost universally, an understanding of homelessness translates into active indignation that such a state of affairs can be countenanced -- an indignation expressed most positively in the joining of efforts to help.

I urge the Congress to secure for itself an education in homelessness. The President may not be able to see the homeless from his mountaintop in California. Perhaps he cannot see that homeless woman who lives with her bags on his doorstep, at the White House gate on Pennsylvania Avenue. But the Congress should not be so blind. Establish a Congressional Commission, or a select committee, or a standing committee. See the homeless. Then, I submit, my proposals will indeed make sense to you.

Everyone knows that it is foolish, in the final weeks of 1982, to propose anything to the federal government -- outside the defense program -- which will cost money. Well this, and other proposals which will be offered today, do indeed cost money. But so too does homelessness. Institutionalization -- in medical or psychiatric hospitals, in penal institutions, in rehabilitation programs -- costs even more money than does shelter or housing. The cost-effective case for shelter and for affordable housing is a case that can be made.

But there is another, more compelling argument. It is more than the cost of human potential, of human usefulness which is squandered when a man or woman can find no warm place to rest. There are, Mr. Chairman, more extreme costs to permitting mass homelessness to continue. Can you, can any member of this subcommittee, estimate that cost of explaining to our young children why there is no room inside for the old woman we pass on the street corner, sleeping in a cardboard box? The homeless, living and dying in on the streets of our cities, are a standing challenge to the moral legitimacy of this nation. The homeless are the shame of America.



1933 / 1983 – Never Again

A Report to the National Governor's Association
Task Force on the Homeless

by Mario M. Cuomo
Governor of the State of New York

1 9 3 3 / 1 9 8 3 -- N E V E R A G A I N

A R E P O R T

to the NATIONAL GOVERNOR'S ASSOCIATION
TASK FORCE ON THE HOMELESS

by

MARIO M. CUOMO

Governor of the State of New York

Portland, Maine

July 1983

I wish to acknowledge the significant contributions made by a number of individuals who helped to make this report possible. First and most important, I would like to thank Kim Hopper who did the original research, photography and drafting of the report and deserves as much credit as anyone for helping to bring the problems of the homeless to the attention of the American public. I am also grateful to the Community Service Society and the Ittleson Foundation for making Mr. Hopper available to me for this effort. The members of my Emergency Task Force on the Homeless have contributed greatly to the body of knowledge on the nature and extent of homelessness in our State and their work made an important contribution to this report. I would also like to thank my Commissioner of General Services, John Egan, and his staff who produced the report under the most difficult of circumstances. Finally, I would like to thank Mary Jane Gunther of my Executive Chamber, whose contribution to this report is second only to that of Mr. Hopper.

WHY THIS REPORT NOW?



Courtesy of the New York Historical Society, New York City.

On January 25, 1983, a crowd assembled on the steps of the National Capitol in Washington to hear what was billed as the "People's State of the Union" address. It was a small gathering--perhaps 300 strong--but a diversified one. There were women, men and children of all ages and colors; there were workers out of work, some with skills, some without, some still searching for work, some not; there were families on public assistance and families too proud to apply; there were people who run soup kitchens and shelters, and people who survive because of them; there were litigators and agitators, researchers and street philosophers, even an odd bureaucrat or two. They had all come this cold blustery day to hear a man named Roosevelt, who lives in one of the abandoned school buildings recently pressed into service as a public shelter.

What he had to say was painfully simple--something is wrong, grievously so, with the state of this nation. Millions of its citizens are homeless. They criss-cross the country in a futile search for work, scavenge food from dumpsters, tie scrap lumber and cardboard together for shelter. Millions more totter just this side of abject poverty, getting by with the help of friends, private charity and food pantries. They are not asking to be put on the dole. No, what these people want, what they need, what they are demanding are three things: food, shelter, jobs.

On that gray day in January, these three words rang out, a defiant counterpoint to the nostrums delivered six hours later in the official State of the Union Address.

Roosevelt was no idle alarmist. Nationwide, estimates of the legions of Americans homeless have run as high as two and a half million.[1] In the last two years, their plight has assumed the dimensions of a national disgrace. It has been the object of Congressional hearings, sustained media attention at home and abroad, and a proliferation of studies and reports the like of which has not been seen since the discovery of "the other America" in the early 1960s. Few can profess ignorance of the problem. But the numbers and the surge of awareness tell only part of the story. There is a disquiet in the streets, not the muted desperation Thoreau lamented, but an angry, ashamed, indignant, uncomprehending one. Why, in this land of conspicuous bounty, should Americans go hungry and homeless?

Often as not, the question goes unasked. The habit of self-blame--the subjective complement to a tradition of rugged individualism--retains its hold long after its validity or utility has been exhausted.[2] Instead, the query hangs silently, presiding

over the stooped shoulders in souplines, the shuffling feet in labor pools, the outstretched arms in plasma banks, the anxious faces of families waiting to see whether or not there will be room for them in the inn that night.

No large city has ever been without its pockets of the dispossessed. But in the 1970s, a number of forces conspired to enlarge and democratize the ranks of the homeless poor: unemployment, the loss and destruction of low-income housing, and ill-planned, poorly executed deinstitutionalization policies. To these factors must now be added the Federal budget cutbacks and disability reviews of the 1980s. As a result, it isn't just a question of geographically well-defined skid rows any longer. The sight of rag-wrapped nomads wandering city streets or encamped in the doorways of shops has become commonplace and the bewilderment, disgust and pity their numbers initially provoked have too easily given way in some quarters to a kind of numbed acceptance of their presence. And these are only the visible; fear and shame keep most of the homeless poor out of sight.

If they had a banner, it would read: We are everywhere.

Editorials condemn official inactivity. Harried local governments scurry to provide something, while fretting over the prospect of becoming a mecca for the homeless poor of neighboring regions. Some cities institute repressive measures--reminiscent of the settlement laws of the colonial era--to force "undesirable elements" elsewhere. Some offer bus tickets to get there. But every "elsewhere" has its own homeless; no inn, no refuge, no shelter goes begging for takers.

Certain memories never fade. As the toll of the newly disenfranchised has risen, a stock observation has crept into accounts of their hardships, now appearing with the regularity of a salute: "not since the Great Depression...." As the following pages will attest, the words are something more than a catchphrase.

This report--a melange of impressions, stories, observations and secondary data where available--makes no pretense to comprehensiveness. Its primary aim is to reduce the distance between those of us still living lives of relative stability and those--some of them our neighbors until quite recently--living lives of fear--some uncertainty and precariousness. It will attempt to recover something of the history as well as the present circumstances of these unsettled lives, and in so doing, to reduce the strangeness so often and so mistakenly attributed to them.

The remoteness is forced, an artifact of our insecurity, our own misgivings as to the contingencies that for the time being ensure the constancy of our lives, our own need to distance what is all

too easily recognizable as a fate against which too few of us are immune. Few of us have the courage to recognize the kinship. Paula Hewitt, a Presbyterian elder serving in a soup kitchen in Salt Lake City, does: "I look at these people and I think: I am one job and one divorce away from them." [3] In a Christmas editorial last year, the Washington Post observed:

...it doesn't require a full flight into madness or alcoholism to earn you a spot on the grates. All it takes is a broken family, lost savings, a disability that won't meet the government's heightened standards for aid, or a Social Security or welfare check that won't pay the rent.

This report is about that kinship, refracted, distorted or attenuated as it may be. What it will attempt to chronicle is not mere victimage, not simple suffering. The report's primary objective is what the historian Olwen Hufton, referring to the survival strategies of the poor in 18th century France, called "economies of makeshift." [4] The phrase captures the arduousness, the resourcefulness of life on hardscrabble road. It also hints at the refusal to give up that characterizes those whose proper lot, from the outside, would seem to be despair. These are tales of survival at the margins of polite society, tales that will undoubtedly unsettle what many of us would prefer to assume is true about those "other Americans."

At best, studies such as this one can provide an antidote to the state of weary resignation this nation appears to suffer from today. They do this by delving into particulars and singularities, making real not the whole problem but parts of it. There is a rude insistence placed upon the reader of such reports to see that the homeless poor have names, have histories and, at some point, had homes and maybe even careers. They are not just unidentified casualties of weather, economy or disability, but people some of us know, or could get to know.

At the same time, studies themselves are no answer, though they may help mobilize the collective will to seek an answer. The historian E. P. Thompson reminds us that the 19th century Irish famine was preceded by five Parliamentary Reports, each more dire than its predecessor, and each predicting imminent disaster. And nothing was done to avert the catastrophe. Closer to home, Will Rogers had this to say when advised that the Roosevelt administration had undertaken a series of studies of the plight of the farmer:

...the commissions are just gathering data. They won't take the farmer's word for it that he is poor. They hire men to find out how poor he is. If they took all the money they spend on finding out how he is, and gave it to the farmer, he wouldn't need any more relief.[5]

What exactly is it that we expect to learn and to impart so that others may learn? In a word, we hope to show that the problem with the homeless poor is less their defectiveness than it is their disenfranchisement from work, decent housing, legitimate income support and appropriate care. The culture of their poverty, as we observed it, is no anarchic realm of the dispossessed. There is an order and an ethos to life on the skids. Its hallmark today is a determined striving to survive with a modicum of dignity intact. It has its own discipline, regularities, codes of behavior and institutions. There is insubordination to be sure, but there is also a yearning to return.

One of those men hired by the Federal government to find out how poor the farmer was in the 1930s had this to say about his own work:

...the effort is to recognize the stature of a portion of unimagined existence, and to contrive techniques proper to its recording, communication, analysis and defense.... This is a book only by necessity. More seriously, it is an effort in human actuality, in which the reader is no less centrally involved than the authors and those of whom they tell.[6]

James Agee went on to characterize his and Walker Evans' description of three tenant farmer families as "a swindle, an insult, and a corrective."

This report, patchworked and incomplete as it is, partakes of a similarly self-contradictory nature. It must situate itself in that narrow band of exposition between urgency and hopelessness, faithful to the scale and complexity of the problem while unyielding in its insistence that constructive action must be taken. As for the first, the "data" are available, largely in the form of the words of the homeless poor themselves; as for the second, there are signs of progress, tentative to be sure, but signs nonetheless that suggest that hope may be something other than the commodity of a trickster. The only real difficulty this report will have to manage is that of maintaining some semblance of grace of composition in the face of so massive an indignity.

THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM



Soup kitchen line, Chicago, Illinois, June 1983.

Nobody knows their numbers with precision--the wandering poor cannot be tagged like geese and their patterns of migration tracked. Something is known, however, about the dimensions of need.

HUNGER

While the Federal government stockpiles billions of pounds of surplus dairy products, wheat and rice, millions of Americans go hungry.[7] Breadlines are lengthening, but with a notable distinction. Counted among their ranks today are once-proud men, women and children; some are newly homeless, others have homes but empty pantries, especially near the end of each month. Soup kitchen workers report another difference as well. Today's supplicants are hungrier than their counterparts of a few years ago. In part, one first suspects, this must be because new arrivals are less familiar with the hours and sites of the free food circuit. But the suspicion fails to be borne out. Despite unprecedented efforts on behalf of private charities, a real scarcity in emergency food assistance exists.

A survey of 181 food pantries and soup kitchens in twelve states, conducted by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities,[8] found a dramatic increase in the number of Americans seeking emergency food aid for the period of February 1982 to February 1983. In that single year, demand in over half of the programs surveyed rose by 50% or more. A third of the programs doubled in size. Voluntary agencies already reeling under the impact of budget cuts have been forced to transfer funds and staff from other programs. Many have taken on volunteers and rely upon donated goods to an unprecedented extent. Nearly a quarter of these agencies had to turn people away. Many of those seeking help were recently unemployed, many were families with children, and a significant portion of those served reported that their food stamps were insufficient to feed their family for an entire month.

Impoverished areas are especially hard hit. In Harlem, between 1980 and 1982, emergency food requests rose by 1250%.[9] In 1982 alone, 669 East Harlem households totalling 2,634 people, 1590 of whom were children, experienced "food emergencies."[10] This represents a 39% increase over the previous year's figure. A food emergency exists, explained Dr. Anna Lou Dehavenon, author of the survey:

when a family has no more food and no money to purchase it, or is in extreme danger of being without food or money soon.[11]

The study attributed the steady rise in such emergencies to four causes: the Reagan Administration's budget cuts and tightened eligibility criteria for entitlements, climbing rates of inflation and unemployment, capricious welfare policies, and severe shortages in low-income housing.

Of the 307 families who had gone to city welfare offices before turning to neighborhood voluntary agencies, only two had received immediate assistance. This refusal compounds an earlier one. A quarter of the welfare households experiencing food emergencies had recently lost their benefits for administrative reasons, victims of a practice termed "churning" in an uncirculated report by the New York City Human Resources Administration.[12] The report defines the procedure as "rapid turnover of cases largely unrelated to changes in client needs." Among reasons for closure typically cited, "failure to comply" with an agency request and "whereabouts unknown" figure highly, together accounting for 80%. Mailings not received, appointments kept but never recorded as such, and appointments missed due to sickness are all included within these two categories. At present, between 15,000 and 30,000 people, half of them children, are affected each month, a rate of case-closings that saves the city \$7 million in withheld entitlements monthly. In most instances, such cases are reopened upon reapplication, often within a matter of weeks. Eligibility was never, in fact, in question. But, as Timothy Casey, author of a critical analysis of the practice, points out: "For a family without food, that month is a long time." [13]

What do hungry families do to survive? They borrow money from friends, often with the explicit understanding that it will not soon be repaid. They queue up in soup lines. They share food. They steal food from supermarkets. They beg. They forage.

As Jack Squicciarini, director of security for the Red Apple supermarket chain in New York City, recounts:

We've apprehended people with social security checks of \$63 a month...In a way you can't blame them for stealing food. How they're supposed to live I don't know...People are hurting. I could show you stores up in the South Bronx where our garbage goes out at night and, within a minute, 40 people are going through the garbage. It becomes leveled.[14]

Such reports are neither exaggerated nor atypical. The extent of hunger in eight cities was documented by the United States Conference on Mayors in a study released June 9, 1983.[15] Among its findings:

- From 1980 to 1982, Detroit, Michigan, registered a near fivefold increase in the number of households served by emergency food programs.
- A similar increase is predicted by San Antonio, Texas, officials for 1982-1983; they estimate that 50,000 people currently in need of food assistance are receiving no help.
- In New Orleans, Louisiana, the first nine months of 1982 saw an increase of over 200% in calls for food aid, when compared with the same period in 1981.
- Emergency food requests rose 112% in Cleveland, Ohio, for 1981-82.
- The number of soup kitchens in Rochester, New York, rose by 75% in 1982, in response to burgeoning need.

Smaller communities have been affected as badly, if not worse so. St. Mary's Catholic Church in Norfolk, Virginia, opened its own soup kitchen in April 1982, the first ever for the 200-year-old parish. The need was too difficult to ignore. Since December of 1981, the number of people seeking emergency food assistance at the church door had quadrupled.[16]

And, again, what is easily observed and measured are only the most obvious indicators of need. A 1982 study of hunger in Oklahoma found that nearly 400,000 people there lived regularly on incomes insufficient to provide an adequate diet.[17] This is a routine, not an unusual, state of affairs for these families. In 1981, according to Census Bureau reports, thirty-two million Americans, one of every seven citizens, were living below the poverty level of \$7,250 a year set for a family of three. Another twelve million were living in near poverty, with incomes no higher than \$9,125 a year. Neither figure has been as high since 1967. The relevance of such figures is simple. Although no statistics on hunger are kept, as Nancy Amidei, director of Food Action and Research Center in Washington, D. C., explains:

The poverty line is a surrogate for the hunger count. They are the people at risk.[18]

Nor is need, even extreme need, any guarantor of assistance. Forty percent of the nearly twelve million households living below poverty level in 1981 received no welfare, no food stamps,

no public housing, no Medicaid, no school lunches. The number of those in need not served has risen steadily since first computed by the Census Bureau in 1979.

Such a trend threatens to eradicate the gains made in the previous decade. Hidden hunger in the United States first came to national attention in 1967 when a group of six physicians told a shocked Congress of their visit to Mississippi:

We don't want to quibble over words, but malnutrition is not quite what we found. The boys and girls we saw were hungry--weak, in pain, sick.[19]

A decade later, that same team was able to report substantial progress in the South. They found "far fewer grossly malnourished people," a fact they attributed to a raft of Federal poverty programs instituted in the intervening years--food stamps, head start, school lunch and breakfast, and Women, Infant and Children (WIC) feeding programs. "But," as the Iowa City Press-Citizen in a series on the new hunger recently observed:

...today, increased unemployment, coupled with \$3 billion in Reagan administration cuts in food stamps alone, have combined to spark the re-opening of America's soup kitchens.[20]

Nor is any sign of relief in sight. As this report goes to press, the Federal administration is warning states of further across the board cuts in food stamp programs to take effect this month.[21] The warning, coming at a time when twenty-two million Americans are receiving food stamps and millions more are eligible, is the first of its kind in the history of the program's twenty years. If put into effect, the administration's reductions would lower the allowance of a family of three in New York, with no outside income, from \$199 to \$159.

Part of the problem is the unavailability of data. Crises are christened as such because they come to the attention of people with access to or control over the channels of public communication. Sometimes, as with the 19th century cholera epidemics, the afflictions of the poor gain prominence and provoke action because they threaten the health of the affluent. But, too often, their suffering goes unheeded because, as Dr. Mitchell Wallerstein, Associate Director of the International Food and Nutrition Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, observes: "...the poor have no voice." Dr. Wallerstein continues:

...most people who are undernourished don't come into clinics. It's very difficult to say, "Cut the poverty programs and you'll have X cases of

HOMELESSNESS

Estimates of those living on the streets, in jerry-rigged structures, or in emergency shelters, are more difficult to come by. In some measure, this is a definitional problem. In addition to those in shelters, or literally without a roof over their heads, there is good reason to believe that large numbers of citizens are making do with quarters that are temporary and makeshift, sleeping on the floors of friends' or family's apartments, tolerating substandard accommodations, or getting by on a day-to-day basis in flophouses, turning to public or private shelters only on those occasions when they lack sufficient funds to pay for a night's lodging. To their numbers must be added those who are institutionalized on a time-limited basis, in hospitals and jails, who, upon release or discharge, will be without a residence. To take a ready instance: estimates of the number of ex-offenders in need of "adequate housing" range from a low of 7% in Pennsylvania to a high of 50% of parolees leaving Minnesota prisons.[27]

It is for these reasons that some researchers have urged adopting as a definition of homelessness anyone "without an address which assures them of at least the following thirty days' sleeping quarters which meet minimal health and safety standards." [28] The states have generally adopted more restrictive definitions. This version is fairly representative:

...persons or families who, on one particular day or night, have neither friends, family, nor sufficient funds which will provide for certain elementary resources they need to survive.[29]

At the other end of the continuum, and more in line with the more comprehensive definition cited above, is that of New York:

...an undomiciled person who is unable to secure permanent and stable housing without special assistance.[30]

Even if, for the sake of simplicity, one restricts the category "homeless" to people who are in shelters or on the street, difficulties abound in securing good estimates of their numbers. They are especially acute for those living in other than officially sanctioned refuges, many of whom have a legitimate interest in not being discovered. Then, too, the pride and fear of street dwellers make an admission of homelessness on their part to an interviewer who is, in many instances, a virtual stranger, a less than straightforward affair. Finally, the various homeless populations themselves may be subject to fluctuations in season, economic activity, and the frequency of such crises as mass displacement from sites of usual residence.

For these reasons, estimates of the homeless population in cities across the country are bound to be rough. In many instances, they are little more than guesswork. A review of reports from a wide variety of sources produced the following:

New York City	60,000 men, women and children pass through public shelters and/or hotels for the homeless each year (Governor's Task Force on the Homeless)
Los Angeles, CA	30,000 (<u>Los Angeles Times</u> , 12/26/82)
Chicago, IL	20-25,000 (Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, and 8th Day Center for Justice, interviewed November, 1982)
Baltimore, MD	12-15,000 (<u>Baltimore Sun</u> , 9/24/82)
Denver, CO	2,500 (Denver Post, 3/6/83, 1/2/83)
Boston, MA	2,000 (Carol Bower Johnson, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, interviewed 7/15/83)
Atlanta, GA	2,100-3,500 (Ed Loring, The Open Door Community, interviewed 10/28/82)
St. Louis, MO	7,677 (Kathleen Matthews, DSS, Division of Planning and Budget, response to NGA questionnaire, 1983)
Phoenix, AZ	3,000 (C. Brown, et al., <u>The Homeless of Phoenix</u> , 6/83)
Pittsburgh, PA	1,500 (<u>Pittsburgh Post-Gazette</u> , 1/22/82)
Richmond, VA	2,000-4,000 (United Way, 12/82)
Philadelphia, PA	8,000 (<u>Philadelphia Inquirer</u> , 12/81)

Minneapolis, MN	900 (<u>Minneapolis Tribune</u> , 11/29/81)
San Jose, CA	1,000 (Jacksonville Community Council, Inc. "Downtown Derelicts Study" 5/82)
Anchorage, AK	400 (<u>Boston Globe</u> , 9/24/82)
St. Joseph, MO	3,797 (Kathleen Matthews, DSS, Division of Planning and Budget, response to NGA questionnaire, 1983)
Cleveland, OH	400 - 1,000 (Federation for Community Planning Study, Oct.1982)
Springfield, MA	570 (testimony of Pat O'Connell, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, before Congress, 12/15/82)
New Orleans, LA	700 (Jacksonville Community Council, Inc. "Downtown Derelicts Study" 5/82)
Salt Lake City, UT	600 - 1,000 (Office of the Mayor, interviewed 7/21/83)
Houston, TX	22,000 transients seen in 1982 (Virginia Cuvillier, Travelers' Aid Society, <u>Wall St. Journal</u> , 11/12/82)
Detroit, MI	5,000 - 8,000 (<u>San Francisco Examiner</u> , 5/2/83) <u>Detroit Free Press</u> , 12/17/82)
San Francisco, CA	8,000 - 10,000 (Central City Shelter Network "Fact Sheet on Homelessness in San Francisco, December, 1982)
Seattle, WA	4,000 (Martha Dilts, executive director of Seattle Emergency Housing Service, <u>The Progress</u> , 1/6/83)
Jacksonville, FL	150-300 (Jacksonville Community Council, Inc., "Downtown Derelicts Study" May, 1982)

Worcester, MA	Over 2,500 ("Profile of the Homeless in Massachusetts," April 28, 1983, Governor's Office)
Tucson, AZ	3,000 (<u>Los Angeles Times</u> , 12/26/82)
Birmingham, AL	291 ("Summary of Shelter Space and Homeless Persons," June, 1983)
Portland, OR	1,000 (Andrew Raubeson, director of Burnside Consortium, interviewed June, 1982)
Miami, FL	4,000 (<u>Miami News</u> , 2/12/83)
Tulsa, OK	1,000 in cars, tents and trailers (United States Conference of Mayors, <u>Human Services in FY'82</u> , October 1982)

Other measures, while indirect, are more reliable. In the last few years, public shelter capacity has increased markedly in New York, Boston, Seattle, and Washington, D. C. Phoenix, Chicago, Detroit, Salt Lake City, San Francisco and Milwaukee have been forced either to open public facilities or to fund private shelters, some for the first time in their histories. Atlanta, Las Vegas, Denver, Tulsa, Houston, Cleveland, Savannah, Birmingham, and Miami are relying upon private charities and religious organizations to meet the need. The results of the recent infusion of emergency jobs bill funds to the shelters and voluntary agencies should make a more complete picture possible by the end of the year.

At any rate, few would dispute the claim that, in the course of the last few years, homelessness in the United States has quietly taken on crisis proportions.

On December 15, 1982, the House Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development heard testimony on the contemporary lineaments of that "portion of unimagined existence" [31] Agee and others had described in the 1930's. The hearings on homelessness in America came one month short of the fiftieth anniversary of the first congressional hearings on homelessness, convened by the Senate Committee on Manufacturers, which resulted in the Relief Act of 1933. That morning, the fourth death in three days attributed to apparent exposure was reported

by the District of Columbia medical examiner.[32] It was a fitting opening to a day which would hear of many more such deaths.

The Committee heard from witnesses who described the panoply of makeshift dwellings resorted to by today's homeless poor:[33] autos turned into mobile homes; hovels strung up under interstate bridges or dug into the cavities of vacant building sites; tent cities springing up across the land, nylon and canvas embodiments of the Hoovervilles of the 1930's; cardboard boxes perched on park benches; public space -- parks, abandoned buildings, transportation depots and doorways -- wherever available, being converted into private refuge until the inevitable order to move on. They learned something about "invisible" homelessness in rural America -- invisible because those forced out of their homes in such communities find refuge with friends or family, migrate to urban centers, or make do with tarpaper shacks which can be called homes only in the most attenuated sense of the term. They heard how, in the past two years, emergency shelters everywhere have been inundated with requests for aid, are filled to overflowing and regularly must turn people away. It is the same story with soup kitchens, patronized in increasing numbers by the homeless poor as well as by people who can just make rent if they buy no food, and by families whose food stamp allotment is depleted well before the end of the month.

They learned of the strains upon families, still housed for the time being, but living on below subsistence incomes, and of the toll in demoralization, child abuse, marital discord, and suicide such strains exact. They discovered, those who had not surmised it already, that there are "people [who] have had to give up their children to others who could provide a home for them." [34] They learned that even when room is available many shelters must split up families in order to accommodate them. They were given numbers -- the three hundred people counted as sleeping rough in a twenty block section of downtown Seattle one November night because the shelters and churches were all full [35] -- and were told stories -- the child of a couple in Denver living in their car, father unemployed, mother working in a fast food stand, who died of hypothermia in the thirty degree weather; [36] the seventy-three year old woman, released after thirty years in mental hospitals and now living in rapid transit booths in Cleveland, because her \$148 monthly social security check was insufficient both to house and feed her. [37] But mostly they were informed that locale after locale was finding, as a St. Paul city councilman put it: "There are more homeless and they are our homeless." [38]

It was not a day marked by facile observations or easy answers. There was testimony from frontline workers, stunned by the scale of the problem they now face and shaken by their own inability to provide sufficiently -- the Salvation Army major from Cleveland who told of discovering, on a midnight tour of the city, that people were living in the Army's clothing deposit boxes [39] (a

practice recently observed as well by his counterpart in Birmingham, Alabama);[40] from emergency shelter workers who described how their rudimentary facilities were becoming, by default, permanent quarters, there being no available, affordable housing to which to refer people; from charity organizations beset by requests for aid accompanied by the note: "We always contributed to your work in the past, can't you help us now?" From folks close enough to the reality to know, the Committee learned that the stories told in the soup kitchens and shelters today have the ring of familiarity to them, the sort of thing that might be heard among one's own friends or family.

It wasn't all second hand. The Committee heard from the local homeless poor as well [41] -- from George Andrews, a Vietnam veteran with a college degree, who lives out of his car while looking for work; from Victoria Mason, mother of two, homeless since August 1982, when her apartment building was converted into a condominium and now living "from shelter to shelter" while looking for work; from Joyce Wilkins, who has cerebral palsy, homeless "because of family problems," who explained: "I am not asking for a handout. All I want to do is work and get myself back on my feet where I can maintain an apartment and help myself;" from Clarence West, employed as a truck driver until March 1982, now living in a garage, seeking spot labor and helping out at a soup kitchen.

If there was one thing remarkable about what transpired in the hearing room that day in December, it was the absence of bitterness among those with every reason to protest that their lot was undeservedly dealt and that our complacency in the face of it is intolerable. This in itself isn't a novel observation.[42] We have already remarked upon how deeply ingrained the habit of self-blame is in this culture. But there is another ruder force at work, too. The exigencies of survival on the street take their own toll, and one of their first and least remarked casualties is the outrage one initially feels at being so unfairly treated. One homeless man recounted how, when he first found himself on the street a decade ago, he would fill with anger upon passing a sidewalk cafe, each table of which would discard more than enough to feed him that night. But after a while, he explained, the rage wears down, it atrophies, to be replaced by a kind of hardedged resignation to one's fate. This shouldn't surprise. Rage, like hope, requires energy to fuel it, collective support to sustain it, if it is to endure. On the street, both commodities tend to be in preciously short supply. And then again, one does have other things to attend to -- like where to sleep and how to eat this evening.



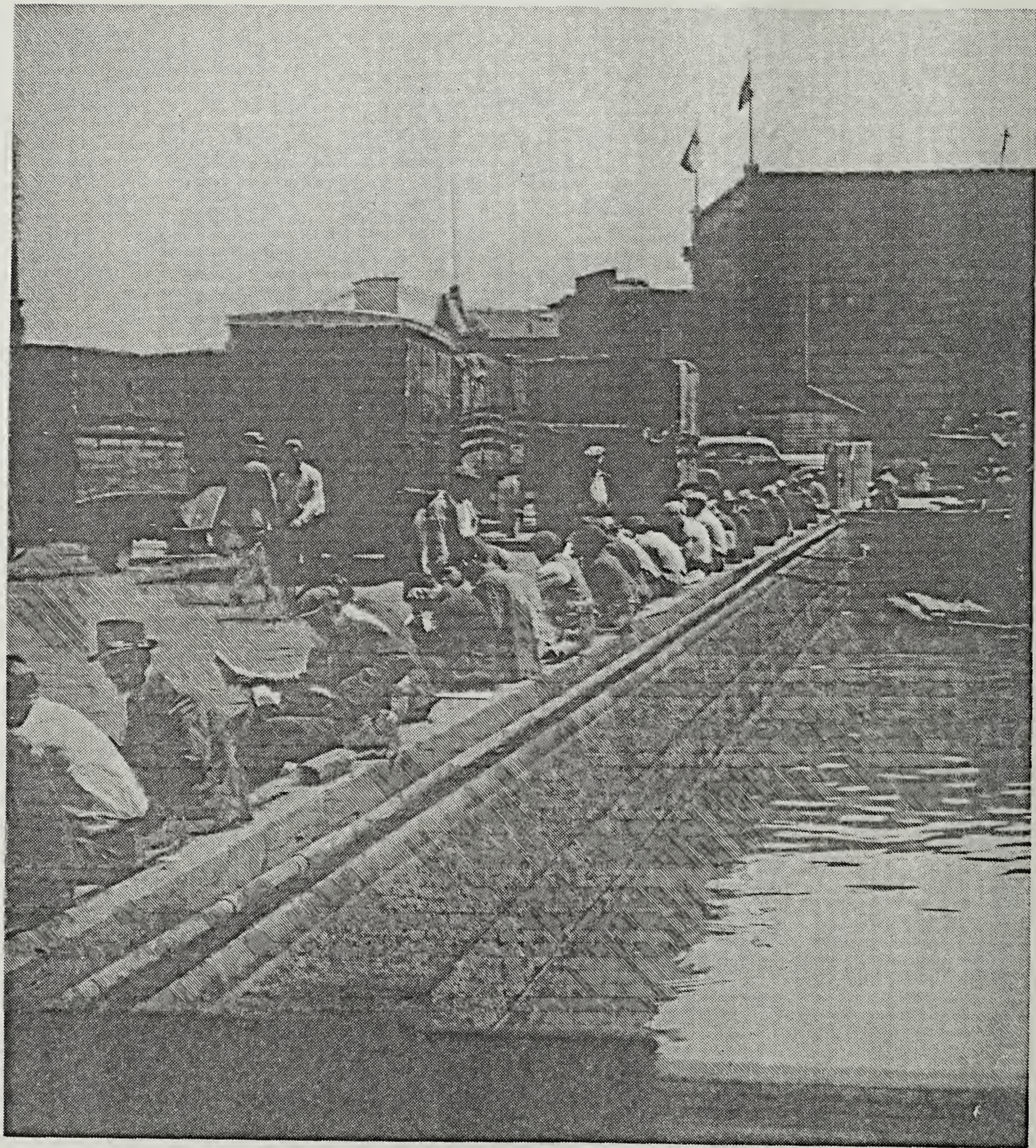
Three Images

At 6:15 this morning, over 300 men and women lined up for sandwiches and coffee at a church half a block from Madison Square Garden. They have been doing so at the St. Francis Breadline for over fifty years. By 7:00, most of them have scattered. But if one looks closely, a trace of their presence can be detected: the lower five feet of the beige brick wall they stand alongside is several shades darker than the rest of the wall. This stain is their signature.

In Youngstown, Ohio, the Salvation Army opened a soup kitchen on January 24, 1983. It was only the second time they had done so, the first occurring during the Depression. The day it opened, preceded by glowing editorials in the local papers, the press turned out in droves to witness the event. And the "event" responded. "The hungry men and women came to get a hot meal free of charge, but some saw the lights and cameras and turned away. They decided to spurn the coverage and go without food." [43] Unemployment in Youngstown has surpassed 22%.

A chronicler of the Great Depression has remarked how "the rich became more conscious of the great gulf between themselves and the millions in poverty. They were less likely to go in for conspicuous display..." Compare: in the spring of 1983, Bloomingdale's Department Store in New York opened a new display in its second floor boutique, called "Street Couture." The display featured clothing designed to mimic the dress of the homeless poor: disheveled, wrinkled, patched and mismatched. A jacket with torn sleeves listed for \$190. An employee insisted that the "street look" sells. "Bag ladies are in," she explained. [44]

REMEMBRANCES OF THINGS PAST:
AMERICAN HOMELESSNESS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE



(Courtesy of the Municipal Archives
of the City of New York)

Society's response to the homeless poor has always been a vexed one, even in the best of times a mixture of "perplexed compassion and charity." [45] Vague fears of their discontent were occasionally given specific form. The realization that hordes of beggars were being recruited as foot soldiers in the religious rebellions of 17th century England led to the enactment of the Elizabethan Poor Laws. [46] In Europe, religious mendicancy was usually considered an exception, its rootless, voluntarily assumed poverty was sanctioned as part of the life of the tonsure and sackcloth. [47]

In the United States, homelessness historically has taken three forms:

A Police Problem

At the least, communities needed protection against roving bands of "rogues and vagabonds." [48] The colonial era's settlement laws adopted in full force the penalties against the crime of vagrancy inherited from British law. The wandering poor were treated as criminals, locked up in almshouses or forcibly removed from communities. At its worst, the public response assumed the form of near-hysteria. The phrase "tramps and communists" came into common use after the Paris Commune of 1871, as a way of dismissing ranks of angry workers as mere fomenters of foreign-bred discontent. [49] This strain continued, in fact, it intensified, well into the Depression. In 1932, a team of psychiatrists was dispatched to the Municipal Lodging House in New York to examine the men residing there. One of them routinely included in his clinical examination the question: "Are you a Bolshevik?" -- although, as one of his colleagues remarked, it was by no means clear that the majority of the respondents even understood the question. [50]

A Pool of Surplus Labor

This was especially the case in the post-Civil War period, when demand was high for "a special kind of labor, a labor remote from family and community life ... [where] jobs were irregular, in scattered and isolated areas." [51] Mining, railroad-laying, logging, bridge-building, tunnel-cutting, and seasonal harvesting: the men who performed these essential tasks, the hoboes and gandy-dancers, made up the ranks of the legendary knights of the road. [52] Theirs was a short-lived, ill-appreciated service, one which was already outmoded by the time of the Great Depression -- a decline sadly documented in Nels Anderson's 1940 sequel to his original (1923) study of The Hobo. [53]

A Suspect Demand for Relief

This, perhaps, is the most potent strain in the tangled inheritance of the homeless poor. Animating it are two distinct traditions: the first is the legacy of the English Poor Laws, with its invidious distinction between the deserving and the undeserving poor.[54] According to the principle of "less eligibility," relief (especially "outdoor" or noninstitutionalized relief) had to be made so onerous, so degrading, as to ensure that it would be an option of desperation. Menial and dangerous labor, the resources of charity and of sorely strapped families, survival by one's wits on the street if need be -- all were to be tried before the state's beneficence was tested. In this way, all but the "truly needy" (the phrase has an honorable pedigree and was originally used without irony) would be deterred.

The second tradition is the cluster of images and phobias -- in addition to that of political dissension -- attached to the figure of the tramp. In the main, these were moral in nature. The menace posed was rendered fitfully by the Dean of the Yale Law School, in a speech before the Conference of State Charities in 1877, when he conjured up:

the spectacle of a lazy, shiftless, sauntering or swaggering, ill-conditioned, irreclaimable, incorrigible, utterly depraved savage.[55]

This fear, as Peter Carlin has shown,[56] was invariably provoked, throughout the latter 19th and into the 20th centuries, by both the person and prospect of the tramp. It was the threat of moral contamination by what was viewed as the first, infectious wedge of a growing degeneration of the working class.

Indeed, it could take an explicitly anti-epidemic form. In 1937, the presiding judge in City of New York v. Miln ruled:

We think it necessary for a state of provide precautionary measures against the moral pestilence of paupers, vagabonds, and possibly convicts as it is to guard against physical pestilence [among newly arriving ships' passengers].[57]

Such an attitude would hold until challenged by the reality of mass hardship that was the Great Depression. In 1941, Justice Byrnes writing for the State Supreme Court in Edwards v. People of California and rejecting the state's citation of Miln, observed:

We do not think it would be seriously contended that because a person is without employment and without funds, he constitutes a "moral pestilence." Poverty and immorality are not synonymous.[58]

Still, the legacy of the tramp dies hard. As Orwell found when he descended into the lower depths of Paris and London,[59] to be "down and out" was to be viewed as dangerous, of suspect moral character, and as a standing affront to polite society's settled sense of the world and its verities. To be sure, street dwellers do strike an anomalous form, but it is one that is internally consistent: their mode of subsistence mimics and reproduces their social identity. Surplus, redundant people themselves, they exploit the surplus utility, the "waste" potential, of public facilities in the interest of personal survival. They "mis-use" waiting rooms to sleep in, restrooms for doing laundry, garbage dumpsters to forage in, subways to pass the night safely.[60]

The problem, once again, is that cultures have ways of stigmatizing waste products in powerfully negative terms. Waste defiles, it corrupts, it pollutes. Things and persons classified as waste do so likewise. And no image appears more frequently in the literature on skid row than that of sewage. As two British researchers have noted, throughout the 1970's the homeless poor were "increasingly seen as residue, the waste that is left over from the normal processes of society." [61]

Matters, of course, get complicated when such excess individuals begin to number in the millions. Matters get complicated when the new cohorts of the disenfranchised turn out, on closer look, to be people with whom the rest of us have little trouble identifying. Matters get complicated when it isn't just the decrepit and discarded, but young, able-bodied men and women, the healthy and the not-so-sound, women and children fleeing abusive family situations, and whole families who have exhausted the resources of kin and friends and have no place left to turn.

Such became the picture in the 1930's when the Depression broke. And although the stain of disgrace borne by the dispossessed was muted, it never was really erased.

The Depression and its Aftermath

By the time the Depression hit, the ranks of the homeless had already grown, their numbers had already diversified. Anthony Muto, writing for the New York Telegram in June 1929, a scant four months before the Great Crash, described how upon entering the city's underground, he

encountered a new tribe of mendicants, one of the lowest in the itinerant's world. These indigents are young and old, male and female, white and black. Some have rackets. Others are content with just the shelter afforded by the subway.[62]

It was prophetic piece: by the time the WPA Guide to New York City was drafted in 1939, it was a matter of record that

the homeless use the subways as a flophouse and during the worst winters of the 1930's large numbers of unemployed lived there for days.[63]

Widows and children were the first group to rise above suspicion of personal corruption and to escape confinement in the almshouse.[64] By the end of World War I, nearly every industrial state had relief programs in place to aid the "worthy widow" and her children. But the "scientific charity" of the Progressive Era further individualized the source of penury. Owing to a variety of vices attributed to them, immigrant groups were thought to be especially prone to sink into poverty. Prima facie evidence for the claim wasn't difficult to locate -- in 1921, 68 percent of the clients seen by the agencies serving the homeless in New York City were foreign-born.[65]

The social work revolution of the 1920's did little to check the tendency to blame the downtrodden for their plight. The Elizabethan distinction between the deserving and the undeserving poor wasn't eliminated, it was recast in modern terms: the former became those in whom virtuous habits could be instilled. As historian David Rothman described it:

Casework lost sight of social reform, focusing instead on teaching the lower classes to cope with their situation, to budget more carefully, to emulate those above them.[66]

If there was one thing that could have forced a re-evaluation of such a posture, it was the unprecedented scale of hardship ushered in by the Depression, coupled with the determination of the newly impoverished not to go under. Traditional skid row areas were transformed from reservoirs of casual labor into huge camps of the dispossessed, staging grounds for a new kind of forced community and resourcefulness. In 1932, journalist Matthew Josephson visited one such "Hooverville," located on the East River of New York at the foot of East 10th Street:

It was a fairly popular "development" made up of a hundred or so dwellings, each the size of a dog house or chicken coop, often constructed with much ingenuity out of wooden boxes, metal cans, strips of cardboard or old tar paper. Here human beings lived on the margin of civilization by foraging for garbage, junk and waste lumber... Most of them, according to the police, lived by begging or trading in junk; when all else failed they ate at the soup kitchens or public canteens.[67]

Similar encampments could be found in vacant lots all along the river's edge, in the swamps along the Hudson on the Jersey shore, and throughout Riverside and Central Parks. The city resorted to floating barges, docked at East 25th Street and South Ferry, to quarter the overflow at the shelters. Little wonder that, in the spring of the same year, Simon Breines in the architectural journal Shelter, suggested that the newly completed but still unrented Empire State Building be turned into a hotel for the homeless poor.[68]

Still, despite the scale of misery and unprecedented government efforts to alleviate it, traditional attitudes toward the poor persisted. Roosevelt himself kept alive the odious term "dole." [69] Distress -- massive, indiscriminating, painfully apparent distress -- failed to undo the legacy of the Poor Laws. That something had gone terribly wrong was obvious. But the locus of responsibility, incredible as it might seem, continued to reside in the victimized. Working class agitation and organization reached new heights,[70] but no wholesale social transformation was forthcoming. In the main, "poverty demoralized rather than activated the country." [71]

No one had learned the lesson of individual responsibility better than the poor and those who were suddenly thrust among them. Oral historian Studs Terkel interviewed scores of people who lived through the Depression. His conclusion:

The suddenly idle hands blamed themselves, rather than society. True, there were hunger marches and protestations to City Hall and Washington, but the millions experienced a private kind of shame when the pink slip came. No matter that others suffered the same fate, the inner voice whispered, "I'm a failure." ...Outside forces, except to the more articulate and political rebels, were in some vague way responsible, but not really. It was a personal guilt.[72]

The net effect of the New Deal and the recruitment for the war effort was once again to deplete the ranks of the dispossessed.[73] Left behind were the aged and decrepit, many of whom had always lived marginal lives and a good portion of whom suffered from alcoholism or serious disabilities.[74] The advent of federal unemployment benefits, readily available social services, an industrialized economy that minimized the need for migrant laborers, coupled with the effects of large-scale urban renewal efforts convinced some postwar observers that the days of traditional skid rows were numbered.[75] If they were to survive, it was thought, it would be because they continued to serve one remaining function, that of

providing a refuge for drop-outs from the working class who have psychic disabilities, a significant proportion of which involve alcoholism...[skid row] may come to function primarily as an open asylum.[76]

It comes as little surprise that a team of sociologists in the late 1960's were able to sum up the distinctive character of the skid row denizen in a two words: his "perceived defectiveness." [77]

Then, after thirty years of gradual decline (and planned extinction in some cases), skid row districts in major urban centers began to stage something of a comeback. The rebirth took place in the mid and late 1970's, although signs of things stirring were apparent as early as the late 1960's. Not only did they begin again to grow, but their constituencies changed markedly. Within a decade, the old Victorian term "homeless" would be resuscitated; "old men drunk and sober" simply failed to do justice to the new reality.

CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS TODAY

Although data are scanty and the longitudinal studies necessary to establish causality non-existent, observers generally agree that the forces responsible for mass displacement throughout the 1970's and into the 1980's are four:

Unemployment -- First appearing among those who were traditionally discriminated against or who were but precariously included in the labor market, but spreading to skilled workers and their families in the 1980's.

Scarcity of Affordable Housing -- The joint product of abandonment, urban renewal efforts mounted in the 1960's (fueled by tax abatements and generous profit-taking), rising fuel costs, and incomes which fail to keep pace with inflation.

Deinstitutionalization of the Mentally Disabled -- A revolution in mental health care, accompanied by humane rhetoric and a sound understanding of the pernicious effects of long-term hospitalization, but which failed to mobilize the necessary resources to complete the job (providing housing and supportive services for ex-patients) once the hospitals were emptied.

Social Service Cutbacks and the Culling of Disability Rolls -- A relatively recent phenomenon, begun in the spring of 1981 and accelerating to date.

It is often remarked that the new forces of dislocation have conspired to create a novel breed of homeless poor -- novel at least for this past half century -- those dubbed the "new poor." But in reviewing the contemporary causes of homelessness, it is

important to realize that the effects of these factors may well outlast the period of their operation. Dislocation may assume its own momentum, spiraling downward in a self-destructive gyre. The tactics of survival learned on the streets (be it a consciously cultivated foul odor, or techniques of vigilance and concealment) serve to further isolate and alienate. What is adaptive behavior on the streets may be ill-suited to resuming a settled mode of living.

Still, a linkage between initial displacement and subsequent deterioration is there. As anthropologist Louisa Stark [78] and planner Brad Paul [79] observe: today's old poor are, many of them, yesterday's new poor, and we would be prudent not to draw too fine a line of distinction between the two groups.

A final caveat is in order: The measures available for causes are often as crude and poorly designed for the needs of this discussion as are measures of effects. "Discouraged workers," those who have exhausted their benefits, those who are employed part-time, and those who have never entered the labor market, are, none of them, included in the unemployment figures -- though they all assuredly lack work. Similarly, displacement studies classically have attempted to measure the effects of forced relocation on disaster victims or on those individuals who have, usually as a stipulation of federal reconstruction grants, actually been relocated in the course of new housing development.[80] Few studies have been focused on the whereabouts of those -- sometimes thousands, as when the Cross-Bronx Expressway was built [81] -- left to fend for themselves; fewer still have followed ex-tenants subjected to harassment, illegal lock-outs or evictions, or other, less direct means of "emptying out" properties slated for conversion.[82] Finally, efforts to track the fate of the mentally disabled released from hospitals or dropped from disability rolls are doomed to frustration for precisely the same reason that such efforts are urgently needed: lack of knowledge of their whereabouts is but a symptom of the poor planning that went into their discharge or discontinuation. Once again, the old saw: those with no voice command little attention.

On the other hand, attention has been paid by shelter workers and city residents who have long noticed what social scientists have only recently begun to document: from the late 1960's on, women began to appear on the streets of large urban centers in startling numbers; the race and age composition of men in public shelters also began to change markedly in the mid-1980's (getting younger, with a much heavier representation of minorities); and, by the end of the decade, the presence of large numbers of obviously disturbed street dwellers had become an almost clichéd feature of downtown avenues.

Unemployment

Although the link between unemployment and displacement seems obvious today, this was not always the case. Historically, the association between unemployment and vagrancy has received mixed interpretations. Deep runs the fear of the man without ties, and no man has shed more ties than the vagrant.[83] Despite what, in retrospect, would appear to have been repeated evidence to the contrary, reformers of the 19th century remained transfixed by their suspicion of the tramp and blamed the influx of immigrants, availability of indiscriminate relief, or ravages of demon rum for the rise in vagrancy that followed each of four major depressions.[84] Idleness was viewed as a moral -- not economic -- evil, the result of character defects. Poverty was considered the lot of the miscreant; few crimes were held "more reprehensible than inability to make a living." [85] It was not until after the panics of 1893 and 1907 -- each attended by widespread violence and vast recruitments into the armies of the homeless -- that attitudes began to shift. Both the sheer numbers and closer scrutiny of their ranks finally persuaded reformers that vagrancy might be the result of unemployment rather than the other way around. The lesson appears to have taken root during the Progressive Era, and was a matter of statistical record by the time the Depression hit. In a 1932 report on the Municipal Lodging House in New York, Nels Anderson was able to cite a study (originally published in 1929) showing a clear association between the two phenomena: demand for shelter could be neatly plotted as a function of unemployment in the manufacturing industry, allowing for a one month lag between the two trends.[86] The remainder of the decade would serve only to drive home the truth of that connection.

Still, however cruel an equalizer the loss of a job had been shown to be, postwar prosperity dimmed the memory and dampened its threat. Except under extraordinary circumstances, it was the sort of thing that was confined to the margins of the work force, people used to fluctuations in demand for their labor. A mere year and a half ago, it almost sufficed to note simply that unemployment showed a decided preference for the already vulnerable, striking, as Elliot Liebow of the National Institute of Mental Health phrased it, "first, hardest and repeatedly at those who can least withstand it, especially the poor, the young and the minorities." [87] One still sees the truth of this observation reflected in the faces and statistics of the public shelters in New York City.[88] The average age of new applicants is 34, with 7 percent under 21; they are predominantly Black or Hispanic; at least half never finished high school; and fully a quarter of them wind up at the shelter owing to loss of a job. Among the "longer-term" (over two months) residents at one of the City's largest shelters, many of whom were far better educated than the average shelter client, nearly 40 percent reported that they were homeless because they had lost a job. Nor is this picture restricted to New York. Where figures are available, the story is

similar: the average age of single homeless and/or sheltered populations surveyed in San Francisco, Boston, and Phoenix is well under 40.

But unemployment has been striking in a widening compass of late and its effect has been to transform the composition of the dispossessed.[89] Everywhere one turns, one hears the same refrain:

From the people who man the missions where the drifters eat and sleep, from the police on the beat who keep them in line, comes the word that the recession has changed the caliber of their clientele.[90]

Police sergeant Ken Ersland of Corpus Christi, Texas, puts it simply: "...the majority of the transients now are looking for work."[91]

For agencies accustomed to dealing with the forlorn, the decrepit, the aged or the chronic alcoholic whose numbers once were the majority of those on the skids, the change is something of a shock:

- from Denver's Department of Social Services: "We're not just seeing only the street people. We are seeing people who are well-educated, with skills, who have just exhausted their benefits from unemployment compensation."[92]

- from the transient registration program, Nueces County, Texas: "...these are a different breed. They're not all bums. About 80 percent of those I've interviewed came here looking for jobs. The majority are unskilled laborers or construction workers, but there have also been at least twenty with a college degree or college hours."[93]

- from a Worcester, Massachusetts shelter: "We've never seen it so bad. There is a new population of homeless -- people who have been working all their lives. More and more families are seeking help, and more young people. Families just can't make it anymore."[94]

- from a church-based shelter in Denver, Colorado: "These are guys and gals who really came from the middle class stature of life. They had things. They had a job, an apartment, a car. They lost them and now they're on the road. With Denver's low unemployment figure, they thought there were a lot of jobs here."[95]

- from the Travelers Aid office in Miami, Florida:
"There are more people on the move in the whole country. A great many people who lost jobs uprooted and came here because of the climate and because they think it might be easier to survive here."[96]

Where so much smoke, somewhere fires are burning. It isn't difficult to reconstruct the typical narrative. Having used up whatever benefits they were eligible for, exhausted the local circuit of job possibilities, worn thin the welcome of friends and family, and thrown hopes of finding comparable work to the wind, [97] some take to the road, remnants of household in tow. They can be found in public and private campgrounds, made conspicuous by the permanent look to their encampments and unusually long lengths of stay. Others make use of emergency lodging for transients provided by such groups as the St. Vincent de Paul Society and Salvation Army. Still others secure accommodations which are at best irregular. Colonies of the uprooted jobless have sprung up in public parks and parking lots, along rivers and viaducts, in vacant city lots, and under interstate bridges across the country. Novel but a few years back, the presence of such settlements today has the ring of the inevitable -- or the twice-seen -- to it. In the Southwest, for example, Yankees have succeeded Okies, and campers and U-hauls have replaced tin-lizzies and flatbed pick-ups, but the destination remains the same: anywhere with steady work.

Others stay put -- lacking marketable skills, wheels, or simply the energy to gird oneself up for the unfamiliar. Then too, stories of dashed hopes and exhausted opportunities have already begun to make their way back north and east, damping somewhat the lure of the south and west. Homeless in familiar surrounds: few are prepared for the scorn and rejection which await them, even in regions hard hit by lay-offs, plant shutdowns and relocations. Pittsburgh has an employment rate which exceeded 17 percent earlier this spring but a twenty-two year old unemployed heavy equipment operator feels none of the camaraderie or sympathy one might expect when the ranks are broadened: "In my own hometown, they call me a transient."[98]

The luckier ones manage to scrape by, some of the time, on odd jobs and handouts, making the familiar rounds of soup kitchens when that fails. Twice a week, the local plasma banks will accept "donations" (for a payment that ranges from \$7 to \$12 per unit.) The process takes one and a half hours and is the most common source of legitimate revenue on the streets today. Possessions are quickly pared down to the essentials -- someone is always

willing to buy a tent, sleeping bag or knife -- and then some. After blood and belongings are gone, and with labor power no longer in demand, options are few. A few prey on passers-by or -- often as not -- on their companion poor. Word has it that the street is much less forgiving, much more dangerous today than it was a decade ago.



Employment -- 6th Avenue, New York City, Circa 1929 (Courtesy of The New York Historical Society).

2. The Shortage of Low-Income Housing

You don't have to be clairvoyant ... to understand the relationship between housing cuts and an old woman out there on the street. You can talk to her and find out that she just got squeezed out of her apartment as it went up in rent, [or] was converted into a cooperative or condominium of some kind. [99]

Over the grim statistics on homelessness looms the shadow of a housing crisis which may well be unexampled in this century. Current estimates by the National Housing Law Project place the number of people who are involuntarily displaced from their homes each year at two and one half million -- casualties of "revitalization" projects, eviction, economic development schemes and rent inflation. At the same time, half a million units of low-rent dwellings are lost each year through the combined forces of conversion, abandonment, inflation, arson, and demolition. [100] When one realizes that the major victims of mass displacement are the poor, those with fewest resources to absorb new hardship or to recover in its wake, it is no mystery that the ranks of the homeless continue to swell.

A number of studies have shown how loss of housing can be the immediate precipitating cause of homelessness. Typically, this takes one of three forms: eviction or threat of eviction; intolerable conditions in one's prior residence; or rent increases that outstrip one's capacity to pay. And so to the dwindling supply of housing stock, must be added the diminished capacity of people to pay for what stock remains.

Three instances from New York City, described in the Congressional Hearings last December, are illustrative: [101]

The welfare department referred Jane to a hotel on the Upper West Side. She left, even with a week's rent paid in advance, because she couldn't bear the filth, the strange noises and people running down the hallways all through the night. She said, "I decided no place is better than that place," and went at first to sleep in the train station sitting up. She distrusts any referrals from the welfare department, and is awaiting a job so that she can secure a decent place to live on her own, preferably outside the city. In the meantime, she has found a cardboard box in which to sleep, located in an alleyway along with ten to fifteen others.

Two elderly sisters dressed in identical, filthy trenchcoats used to live in a hotel for women around the corner that provided breakfast and supper. "The rents were reasonable in 1941, but I don't know what it would be today." Later they shared a oneroom apartment until about four years ago when a rent increase sent them to the train station to live.

An impeccably dressed, small-framed woman in her late sixties stood quietly in the entranceway to Grand Central Station at 2:00 a.m. with her hands folded, because she "had no place to go nights." She said that she had had such bad luck and that with rents so high, she couldn't afford both a place to stay and food to eat. She picks up a social security check at the bank every month but it is barely enough to get by on. She added, "It's disgraceful that in such a rich country as this, so many people stand in doorways all night. It must be mismanagement of funds or corruption or something."

Nor are these isolated instances:

In May 1982, three hundred and fifty men were displaced in Chicago when two SRO hotels were emptied to make way for a luxury housing development. Relocation aid was limited to \$10 and was restricted to those who could show rent receipts from new landlords. Half the tenants -- many of whom were elderly pensioners and had lived there for ten to fifteen years -- were unable to meet the stipulation. Many of them are now living in flophouses, in missions, or on the street. The Chicago Coalition for the Homeless estimates that one thousand people have been displaced owing to recent demolition of SRO hotels. [102]

Detroit's City Planning Commission reports that in 1982 there were eighty-five hundred multiple dwellings in the city -- a decline of 17.7% over the figure in 1980. The Coalition on Temporary Shelter there blames the loss of such residential units, in part, for the rise in homelessness. [103]

Over a quarter of one hundred and forty-five households seen in emergency shelters by the St. Louis Relocation Clearinghouse in 1981, had sought shelter due to eviction or overcrowding. [104]

Despite a moratorium on hotel conversions passed in November 1979 and a permanent anti-conversion ordinance in 1980, the number of residential hotel units in San Francisco now stands at less than twenty-one thousand -- representing a loss of ten thousand units

since 1975. A report by the Central City Shelter Network states: "A clear relationship exists between displacement, evictions, rising rents, loss of the city's low-income housing stock, and the growing numbers of homeless people in San Francisco." [105]

In the winter of 1980-81, an outreach team in Manhattan made contact with nearly one hundred homeless men and women. Fully 70% of those for whom information on prior residence was obtained stated that they had been on the street for less than a year; 60% of that group said they had been evicted. [106]

Of the one thousand eight hundred and twenty-eight clients seen in 1979 by Housing Counseling Services in Pittsburgh, 27.4% were either living with friends and relatives or in emergency shelters. A total of one hundred and thirty-five (or 7.4%) had no housing at all. [107]

Little wonder that emergency shelters find themselves becoming permanent quarters by default. A third of the shelter residents in Hennepin County, Minnesota, currently appear to be "relying on the shelter system for housing on a long-term basis," [108] there being little hope for placement elsewhere.

Many others are perched just this side of homelessness, the last stop on a slide downward that may take months, even years, before all available alternatives are exhausted. A laid-off auto worker in Detroit, for example, may be eligible for a year or more of benefits, may be reinstated for a while and so can get further benefits, and may apply for relief or welfare after benefits run out. The net effect in a failing local economy, however, is only to delay not avert the inevitable:

It still takes another six months to have a home foreclosure. It takes two or three years for those people to become homeless. [109]

It isn't just rental housing that is affected. The Mortgage Bankers Association reports that one hundred and thirty thousand Americans lost their homes due to foreclosure in 1982. Farming regions were especially hard hit: the rate of foreclosure was 1.6% in Illinois, 1.41% in Ohio, 1.36% in South Dakota, and 1.1% in Indiana. The national average for the last four months of 1982 was 0.67%. In Illinois, foreclosures have risen 25 - 30% in the last fifteen months, reflecting the state's long-standing high rate of unemployment. The newest victims are those who have exhausted their unemployment benefits. [110]

In Wisconsin, farm foreclosures are at their highest level since the Great Depression. Of nine thousand farmers on the lending

rolls of the Farmers Home Administration, two hundred and thirty-one have filed for bankruptcy. [111] In Illinois, 20% of all FmHA loans were delinquent in 1982, three times the 1970 level. Among FmHA borrowers nationwide, there were one thousand two hundred and forty-five bankruptcies, five thousand nine hundred and eight liquidations and eight hundred and forty-four foreclosures. [112]

Families are often the first line of resort once homes have been lost. The Census Bureau's Annual Survey of Housing found that in 1982, the number of households with two or more related families sharing space jumped from 1.2 million units to 1.9 million units -- an increase of 58%, the first significant such increase since 1950. [113] Fully seventeen thousand people in public housing in New York are thought to be "doubling up" in this manner. [114]

The strains attendant upon overcrowding should be obvious. The humiliating state of "pre-homelessness" has been described by a coordinator of the Bethany Women's Center in Washington, D.C.:

It's so sad to see these people struggling, living so marginally, cooped up maybe two families to a room. They are so close to being homeless, but they are still trying desperately to hang on. [115]

Sooner or later, the limits of tolerance are reached. Or, a buried pride may resurface:

Mr. Black is a fifty-eight year old man from Galveston, Texas, currently collecting General Relief and residing at one of the hotels used for housing the homeless in San Francisco. He is a frail man with wispy, grey beard, whose voice gains in precision and resonance as he talks. He worked on WPA projects, cutting brush, in Texas in the late 30's. Worked at a variety of jobs throughout his life, but always worked. Lost his home through a financing swindle, when he was talked by a relative into taking out a second mortgage. Lived with his son for a while after that, but gave it up because, as he explains, his son found that he "was getting in his way." The son, he adds, "never gave a thought to how [the son] got to where he is." Found himself penniless, without a roof over his head -- for the first time in his life.

Ruth, an elderly woman in her 60's, sits perched on a milk carton on Market Street in downtown San Francisco. She is a lively, clear-eyed, articulate, proud; a genteel woman. She worked steadily as a seamstress for more than forty years; began by sewing parachutes for the war effort in New York City for \$35 a week. Lived then

in a Salvation Army hotel for working women. Moved west and found intermittent work in Los Angeles for a number of years. Eventually that dried up. She found herself without a home, stayed with friends for a while, and then took to the streets. Friends helped her out with cash even then, but, thinking that things might be better north, she borrowed bus fare and came to San Francisco six months ago. Stayed in hotels rented by the city for the homeless for a while, but found conditions intolerable there. Never on relief before, and too proud to apply now. Lives on handouts.

Again, those who have lost homes are only the most desperate of those experiencing housing distress. Figures for New York City and State are especially telling. Nearly half of all tenants in the City currently spend at least 30% of their gross income for rent and utilities. In 1981, 31% of all renters spent more than 40% of their income for rent -- an increase of 83% since 1968. Among households receiving public assistance (excluding SSI), the figure is 72%; among the occupants of dilapidated housing (which accounts for 4.2% of all renter-occupied units), it is 45%. Fully 38% of all renters with incomes under \$6500 live in dilapidated or severely deteriorated housing. The conclusion is inescapable:

Financial sacrifice by poor New Yorkers does not guarantee occupancy of adequate housing, nor does the acceptance of inadequate housing necessarily imply a low housing expense burden. [116]

Nor is this a problem restricted to large cities. A review of housing needs in North Carolina -- where 5.2% of the homes, compared with 2.7% nationwide, lack plumbing facilities -- concluded that: "The most severe housing problems for low and moderate income families and elderly persons are the short supply of affordable housing and the widespread existence of lower cost housing which is neither safe nor sanitary." [117] One-third of the state's poor households live in substandard housing. [118]

The problems of the dependent and disabled poor are especially severe. Statewide in New York, the number of single, Home Relief or SSI recipients rose 77% between 1970 and 1980. At the same time, shelter allowances for this growing population (set in 1975) have failed to keep pace with rent inflation. As a result, 56% of Home Relief recipients and 50% of SSI recipients are paying rents in excess of their shelter allowance. [119] The implication of such statistics is clear: when pressed, many poor people must choose between eating regularly and paying rent.

3. The Failure of Community Psychiatry

The history of this movement is well known.[120] The shift in mental health policy from institutional to community-based care resulted in a dramatic decline in the censuses of public mental hospitals -- from 559,000 in 1955, to 505,000 in 1963, to 216,000 in 1974, to approximately 146,000 in 1979. Despite its popular depiction as a "deinstitutionalization" movement, it is more accurately considered one of reinstitutionalization. Many of the chronically mentally disabled adults in the United States, estimated to number between 1.7 and 2.4 million are still institutionalized -- in nursing homes and public mental hospitals. Moreover, most of those who remain in public hospitals have been found not to require in-patient care; they could be living in less costly and less restrictive settings in the community were such residences available.

Similarly, most of the chronically mentally ill in nursing homes are inappropriately placed; they are there owing to the lack of other suitable residential alternatives. While the numbers of chronically mentally ill persons in community settings are especially difficult to gauge; nationwide the range is 800,000 to 1,500,000. Among these people, some are cared for by families, while others -- 300,000 to 400,000 nationwide -- are consigned to unsafe or substandard board and care homes. Increasing numbers of the mentally disabled are found confined within the criminal justice system. In urban centers, many thousands still live in single-room-occupancy hotels although, as noted earlier, the supply of such dwellings is shrinking dramatically. Thousands of others are simply left to fend for themselves on the streets, searching for food and warmth, and doing slow damage to their mental and physical well-being.

No aspect of contemporary homelessness is more riddled with myths and misunderstandings than its perceived association with chronic mental disability. Admittedly, the linkage is there, but it is neither so common nor so determinant a factor as is often thought. As Philip O'Connor suggested some time back, [121] at least some portion of the readiness to label the homeless as mad is a way of quelling the uneasiness the presence of such individuals provokes. If homelessness were simply a matter of personal eccentricity or pathology, the unstated argument goes, then it cannot be indicative of any larger societal failure; it calls nothing in question -- except perhaps the wisdom of psychiatric commitment policies.

The following passage, taken from the introduction to a series on deinstitutionalization in the Philadelphia Inquirer is evidence that this attitude persists:

Walk America's streets and you can see them: dis-sheveled men and women rummaging in trash cans, curled up on steam grates, cowering in subway tunnels. They are insane.[122]

Lest there be any misunderstanding: the bulk of research to date indicates that (1) the majority of the homeless poor are not seriously mentally disabled; and that (2) even for those with severe disabilities, preferable alternatives to re-hospitalization exist, although in far too short a supply. Moreover, it is often not a simple matter to judge to what degree an observed disorder should be considered a cause, and to what degree a consequence, of street-living.

Nevertheless, that large numbers of psychiatric patients were discharged with insufficient consideration of their residential placement outside the hospital, and that many of them subsequently wound up in the streets are undeniable. In addition, owing to restrictive admitting criteria put into effect over the course of the last fifteen years, many persons who formerly would have been hospitalized are now turned away. Prominent among this latter group are the so-called "young adult chronics." [123] In the absence of alternative sources of housing and clinical attention -- be they crisis residences or other supportive refuges -- some of these individuals, too, wind up on the streets.[124]

In the last decade, British, Canadian and United States researchers have found a growing number of the psychiatrically disabled among the ranks of the homeless poor. By 1978, for example, psychiatrists in New York City had christened the Bowery one of newly emerging "dumping grounds" for the casualties of the deinstitutionalization movement.[125] Neighborhood residents, incidentally, had noticed this sometime earlier and registered their displeasure with local legislators. As attention to this new addition to the population of skid rows -- a population which, it may be recalled, had been in decline until the mid-1970's -- intensified, the rhetoric of concern heated up. In 1979, a report from the Office of the City Council President compared the Men's Shelter to a nineteenth century asylum.[126]

Exactly how many psychiatrically disabled, homeless poor there are is difficult to say, in part for the reasons discussed earlier. The proportion of the homeless population found to be significantly disabled and/or casualties of the deinstitutionalization movement varies from region to region. It may also vary from study to study in the same region, owing to differences in study

design, population sampling procedures and criteria of clinical evaluation. A review of available studies produced the following:

In New York City, estimates of those who are severely disabled and/or are ex-patients among the homeless range from a low of 20%, [127] to a high of 66% in one study of a probably atypical sheltered population.[128] The safest, most commonly reported figure is about a third.[129]

In Albany, outreach workers report 38% of the homeless contacted have significant psychiatric problems.[130]

In Phoenix, the estimate of the "severely mentally disturbed" among three hundred and forty-five of the city's homeless interviewed in two shelters this past year, is put conservatively at 20%, since "more of these individuals tend to refuse interviews than any other group." [131]

In Boston, a clinical evaluation of 78 men and women sleeping in a public shelter earlier this spring found that 39.5% of them show signs of "major mental illness," and a third of the total had been previously hospitalized.[132]

In San Francisco, a study by the Department of Psychiatry at San Francisco General Hospital estimated that seven hundred of the city's four thousand homeless were chronically mentally disabled.[133]

A number of studies, primarily ethnographic in nature, have depicted the special hardships of the mentally disabled on the streets. Subject to the derision or studied blindness of passers-by, often rebuffed in their attempts at panhandling and battling imagined as well as real dangers, theirs is an especially difficult existence. Not surprisingly, some return to the portals of the last place they called home -- the hospital. A soon to be released study of fifty homeless patients in a New York City municipal hospital medical emergency room found that the majority were over forty, white and male, who had no address at all (an additional third gave either a shelter or a flophouse as an address). Nearly half had spent the previous night on the street. Over half of them had a history of psychiatric hospitalization. Many use the hospital emergency room as a form of respite from the street, coming in to get out of the cold, snatch some safe rest, or acquire food or subway tokens. Fully 20% of all psychiatric admissions to municipal hospitals in New York City are homeless persons.[134]

A witness from Chicago recounted the following in the Congressional hearings last winter:

Once these men and women were discharged from psychiatric hospitals, it became evident that in reality, they were mostly left to fend for themselves. Many were completely lost by the Department of Mental Health system and found themselves without medication. Lost, confused and having regressed in the premedicated state, these men and women became the victims of violence, abuse, hunger, disease and homelessness in the streets of Chicago Sixty-seven-year old Clare, and this is real, can be seen daily in one of the abandoned buildings in uptown picking her way through the rubble of plaster, the rotten wood, clothed in rags and she sleeps in one of these same buildings Let me assure you that her life is not something out of a story book.[135]

Even when public shelters are available, problems of the psychiatrically disabled homeless poor face special difficulties. Some mistrust the offer to help, having been burned too many times in the past. But other factors, as well, are relevant:

1. If anything, the inbuilt deterrent features of public shelter -- the dirt, degradation and debasement that have at times accompanied the offer of relief -- are more powerful for people who are keenly sensitive to the merest trace of danger in their surroundings.
2. Moreover, the rigors of street life -- the isolation, vigilance, and self-sufficiency required -- serve to intensify whatever intrinsic sense of suspiciousness one arrives with. It is not a novel observation that the effects of severe social deprivation on one's mental and physical health can be considerable. Nor should it surprise anyone that even the debilitating symptoms often found among veteran street dwellers are markedly reduced once basic living needs have been met and safe haven secured. (A notable instance in this respect is the Travellers' Hotel in New York.) The principle is simple: clinical and social needs, and the resources needed to meet them, in this population are intimately entwined.
3. As a result of the deterrent features of public shelter, an unnatural "triaging" may take place, which ensures that those most in need of a protective environment are those least likely to

secure it. The public shelters, in effect, select for the younger, more resourceful and resilient among the homeless poor. The streets retain the rest. This alone may help explain the difference sometimes remarked between official surveys of the captive homeless populations and the street reports of outreach workers: the latter consistently yield a picture of a more elderly and disabled population on the streets. [136]

It has become evident that any effort to salvage a policy of community care will require that a continuum of supportive living facilities -- emergency, transitional and long-term -- be made available to the chronically disabled. Evidence for Federal recognition of this necessity is abundant: the 1975 Amendment to the Community Mental Health Centers Act, the 1977 Comptroller General's Report to the Congress, the 1978 President's Commission on Mental Health, the Mental Health Systems Act of 1979, the 1980 report "Toward a National Plan for the Chronically Mentally Ill," NIMH's Community Support Program and the HUD-HHS Demonstration Program for the Chronically Mentally Ill. Still, despite the fact that the development of supportive housing was considered a priority issue throughout the 1970's, and the fact that the research and evaluation literature on community residential care consistently shows that the disabled can fare well in community settings, the supply of such alternative programs remains critically limited. Two fundamental barriers are commonly cited: community opposition and insufficient financial support, especially the lack of capital resources at local and state levels which remain tied to state institutions.

As is the case in other large urban centers, the shortage of housing for the chronically mentally disabled in New York City is acute. Between 1965 and 1977, New York State records show 126,000 discharges from state hospitals to the New York City area. This figure does not include the many thousands who were refused admission under the new stringent entry criteria. If one excludes readmissions and deaths, 47,000 chronically mentally disabled people are thought to reside in the metropolitan area.[137] The rapid shrinkage of the low-cost housing stock in New York City, the result of rent-inflation, abandonment, and conversion of the single-room-occupancy hotels in particular, has displaced thousands of former patients. And while such settings were anything but optimal, surely they were preferable to the alternatives -- the emergency shelters or the streets.

To be sure, successful aftercare programs for ex-patients have their own problems. Even with regular reminders, many ex-patients on occasion forego prescribed medications because the obvious side effects of the drugs brand them publicly as "mental cases." The intensive supervision and standardization that such

programs demand may take on tyrannical aspects, however benign the intent. And, perhaps most damaging of all, there really is very little momentum to leave such programs. After all, what are they "transitional" to? To be clinically judged no longer in need of care would mean ejection from a space and routine that, for all their restrictiveness, ensure companionship and assistance; reduction of one's living stipend, because disability benefits are invariably set higher than general relief; and, in all likelihood, no real prospect of employment to replace the make-work of rehabilitative schemes. And so, a covert treachery is built into the more advanced programs of this sort. They -- and, more importantly, their clients -- become victims of their own success. To the degree, that is, that they teach the ex-patient the skills needed for independent living, they also instill real doubts about the prudence of exercising them. In effect, to some extent ex-patients "learn" the behavior appropriate to the "chronic mental patient" and so guarantee themselves the security of a known world. As many of Sue Estroff's informants in Madison, Wisconsin discovered, "making it crazy," especially once you know the terrain and players, looks a great deal better than the prospect of making it just plain poor.[138]

The only real answer to the dilemma is to recognize that the primary need of such individuals is for permanent housing, shored up where necessary by appropriate supportive services. Only in such an environment will the prospect of "getting better" lose its association with "losing out." Models, including patient-run alternatives and mixed housing types, [139] are not lacking. What is lacking are the resources and political will to put them into practice.

The alternative isn't pleasant to contemplate:

San Francisco, coffee house catering to the poor and homeless, July 8, 1983: Totally fruitless attempt to converse with a man who looked to be in his late 30's. He was painfully, obviously troubled, pacing back and forth across the room, wringing his hands, chewing fingernails. Alternately quizzical, irritated, bemused and perplexed by my overtures. Accepted coffee and cigarettes, but had acute difficulty responding to any query. Grimaced, contorted his mouth, rehearsed a response for minutes on end, and then would reply: "Now, what was it you were saying?"

After several unsuccessful attempts to communicate, (punctuated by his apologies: "I can't find my voice box," and "I seem to be confused, excuse me") it came out that he had been on the streets for three years, currently sleeping on the square of the Trans Am building.

His appearance is gaunt, with a ravaged face and bad teeth; so skinny that his pants hung from his buttocks as though pinned to his hips and falling freely thereafter.

4. Reductions in Disability Benefits

In the past two years, a fourth factor has entered the picture: intensified review procedures, initiated at the federal level, of disability aid recipients has resulted in many qualified claimants losing their benefits. In September 1982, the Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report estimated that

about 158,000 persons have been taken off the rolls since the stepped-up reviews began last year, causing a flood of horror stories and complaints to congressional offices.
[140]

By June 7, 1983, that number had risen to more than 350,000.
[141]

Evidence compiled from seven different regions by the Mental Health Law Project in March 1982, indicates that most often the loss of benefits is due to a severely checked ability on the part of the recipient to challenge the ruling -- and not to a legitimate winnowing from relief rolls those who have recovered. Equally noteworthy, mental disability is over-represented in successful review cases (those that are discontinued) by a factor of three: roughly 11% of all disability checks go to the mentally disabled, but nearly a third of the discontinued cases are psychiatrically impaired. The word given to local review offices was direct and simple, according to the Wisconsin head of the state disability review agency: "Deny, deny, deny." [142]

The rationale behind such cuts is apparent. The federal government expected to save some \$11 billion between 1981 and 1984, by culling the disability rolls by almost 700,000 of the currently 4.3 million, and by continuing to enforce stricter approval procedures for first-time applicants. But the savings are offset by the administrative costs of the appeals process and of reinstatement -- 60% of such appeals are successful. They are also offset by new costs incurred through higher rates of institutional reimbursement for those discontinued cases who return to nursing homes or hospitals. The net effect is projected to be both a marked reduction in cost savings to the federal government and a transfer of costs -- conservatively estimated at \$3 billion -- to the states. [143]

In February 1983, the state and city of New York sued the federal government charging capricious and harmful treatment of the mentally disabled under the intensified review. One case described in the complaint is that of Richard Roe, a thirty-six year old man diagnosed as paranoid schizophrenic and currently residing in a city shelter after living for a while in Central Park. Mr. Roe is subject to hallucinations, talks to himself and, owing

to his disability, has not worked for six years. His application for SSI was denied because it was determined that although he cannot return to his "usual" job, "there are 'many other jobs' that he can do." [144]

According to John Svahn, Commissioner of Social Security, the Administration is only legally required to determine whether an individual has the capacity to do any work; it has no responsibility to consider whether there are actually any suitable jobs available. [145]

Withdrawal of benefits to those already receiving them can be especially traumatic. The letters received by erstwhile beneficiaries read like modern products of Charles Dickens' "Office of Circumlocution." Several cases were obtained from Advocates for the Disabled in Phoenix, Arizona:

Mr. Monroe was twenty-six and married, and had been in psychiatric treatment for almost ten years. He received notice of his discontinuation of benefits in July 1982. The full text of the explanation reads as follows:

You said that you are disabled because of mental breakdown. You have indicated that you are still unable to work because you are still scared and get paranoid as well as having some hallucinations. The evidence in file shows that you do have a history of a mental condition, however, you have responded well to treatment and medication. Your impairment has not disabled you from all work activity at any one time for a period of twelve continuous months.

Mr. Monroe subsequently committed suicide. He told a caseworker he "had to sacrifice himself in order to protect his wife and children."

Mr. Riggins was fired as a bag boy in a local grocery store that had "made every effort to accommodate him." The full text of the explanation of his notice of discontinuation follows:

You said that you are disabled because of being mentally retarded. The evidence in file shows that while you may have trouble in learning new things and you may feel nervous at times, you are still able to think, communicate and act in your own interest. You should be able to understand, remember and carry out simple one or two step job instructions. We realize that your mental retardation and your lack of concentration prevent you from doing your past jobs, but these conditions do not keep you from doing other types of work requiring little or no training.

Mr. Riggins' case was reinstated upon appeal.

These are not isolated examples. The general message of such notices, according to Jim Hislop of Advocates for the Disabled, is clear: "You can walk and talk and tie your shoes, therefore . . ." Nor is supportive documentation, often rendered in meticulous detail, of the severity of persisting disability any guarantee of an effective challenge to a ruling. The clinical evaluation of one individual who received notice of reevaluation in August 1981, reads, in part, as follows:

[Mr. Baird] has the fragile ego structure of a chronic schizophrenic. He is unable to cope with the stress of everyday life without the constant support of the in-site staff of his residence and the interventions of this clinic. He is a fearful, isolated individual who is totally dependent upon the social structure provided by his residence. He has been referred to Day Programs on several occasions, in the past, but these experiences have proved to be so threatening that his symptoms increased to an alarming degree (particularly in view of his suicidal attempts), and the programs were discontinued.[146]

Mr. Baird's case was terminated in November 1981, and was successfully appealed the following spring.

There is a certain irony, cruel though it may be, to such terminations. According to Dr. Ginny Gerbino, attending psychiatrist at Kings County Hospital in New York:

These people, who are most in need of what public assistance benefits have to offer, are rendered helpless when benefits are cut off precipitously. It is tantamount to punishing these patients for the progress they have made in staying out of the hospital.[147]

Less easy to document, though no less harsh in their consequences, are the indirect effects of federal social service cut-backs on local assistance programs. The United States Conference of Mayors in their October 1982 report, Human Services in FY82, found that in the wake of the federal program cuts of 1981, the ability of cities to meet a rapidly rising demand for emergency food and housing assistance has been crippled. Nationwide, the mayors estimated, 43% of a burgeoning need for relief will be met by existing programs.[148] In Hennepin County, Minnesota, 67% of emergency shelter recipients in the first half of 1981 had recently been dropped from local aid programs -- programs which were forced to curtail their activities due to funding cuts.[149] Since the Federal Omnibus Reconciliation Act of October, 1981 went into effect, one thousand fifty-five families in Alameda and San Francisco counties have been cut from AFDC rolls.[150] And in Massachusetts, statewide hearings in early 1983 in twenty-five different communities showed that at the same time as the demand for emergency services is increasing, the ability of local agencies to meet the need is being curtailed:

Community agencies who are experiencing the combined impact of Proposition 2 1/2 and federal cutbacks, are unable to keep pace with the increasing demands of the new homeless: families receiving AFDC benefits, battered women, and young adults [who] are seeking temporary shelter. Shelters unanimously report that they are unable to accommodate all of those in need and [that] the turnaway rate is increasing daily.[151]

So severe has been the outcry against the accelerated reviews, that new rules were announced to retire the determination process earlier in June 1983. In a statement remarkable for its logic, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Margaret Heckler, defended the results to date:

We have no reason to believe that there have been any unjust findings The results have been fair, but the process has been very insensitive ...[152]

Advocates were generally unconvinced that the proposed changes will mean an easing of such rulings.

The Special Problems of Victims of Domestic Violence and Homeless Youth

With emergency haven in short supply, the situation of battered women and their children is desperate. Where length of stay restrictions are in effect, protective shelter can become an unwilling accomplice in the cycle of domestic violence, as provisional sanctuary gives way to forced return to intolerable family situations. In statewide hearings in both Massachusetts and New York, the story was told repeatedly. Where temporary shelter is a dead end because of the unavailability of decent affordable housing, and time limits are imposed on those seeking refuge, women and their children have no option but to return to the abusive houses that were the cause of their seeking shelter in the first place. Lack of space, too, may mean that some never receive even temporary respite.

In Salem, a shelter for battered women is forced to turn down 50% of their callers for lack of space. In October 1982, forty-two calls were received from women seeking help. Nineteen of them were refused and had no alternative but to remain home. In Franklin County, the same thing: there is a waiting list for shelter spaces, "which means that some battered women must remain in abusive settings." In Boston, even when women and children are able to locate emergency shelter, many are unable to afford to move on to new accommodations and must

return home. A shelter for women and children in Holyoke turns away between three and six applicants each day; its counterpart in Lowell turns away between one and five abused women daily. Abby's House in Worcester reports that the number of battered women in need of help is rising faster than any other group of women and children. Areas with no shelters commonly refer calls to already overburdened facilities in neighboring cities.

In Albany, Mercy House has so few options to which to refer the women it shelters that, as a result "some women return to very questionable situations with [only] a patching up of the problem that brought them [here] to begin with...." A shelter for battered women in Binghamton refuses to turn women in trouble away and operates at seventeen percent above capacity. The overcrowding and lack of housing to which to refer clients, often results in women returning to abusive situations. New York City shelters for battered women report the same situation. A shelter for women and children in Syracuse has seen the proportion of its caseload who are battered women rise from 40 to 70 percent over the last few years. In 1982, two hundred and twenty-seven women were turned away for lack of space. Another shelter in the same city reports that it is seeing "a new situation in terms of the battered woman...[husband] out of work, pressured, turns to drink, starts beating the family up...a man who may never have been violent before...." A Salvation Army shelter in Buffalo is so overcrowded that women and their children are sometimes forced to share the same bed -- and it turns away as many as it serves.

The plight of homeless youth changed markedly in the last several years to the point where social service agencies report that the problem is no longer one of "runaways" but of "throwaways." As one shelter in Albany puts it:

They are coming to us because they have been pushed out or thrown out of their homes.[153]

Nationwide, the Department of Health and Human Services estimates that 350,000 of the youth who left home in 1982 had nowhere to turn.[154]

In San Francisco, their numbers are estimated at between one thousand and two thousand;[155] in New York City, nine voluntary agencies serving homeless youth reported twenty-five thousand contacts in 1982 alone. One shelter harbored over

eight thousand different youngsters that year. Covenant House reports a three hundred and sixty percent increase from 1977 to 1983.[156]

A new phenomenon is surfacing as well, one not seen since legions of homeless youth rode the rails in the 1930's. In areas affected by high rates of unemployment, families evicted for failure to pay rent often have no recourse but to split up, placing children in the homes of friends or families or turning them over for foster care, while parents seek emergency shelter.

Again, statewide hearings in Massachusetts and New York yielded many examples of the situation these young people face:

In Binghamton, seven children (aged 14-17) were discovered living in a parking garage downtown. The community responded by treating it as a police problem and the kids disappeared. No one knows where they went. The Rescue Mission in Utica reports a four hundred percent increase in the numbers of homeless youth seen over the past year. In Albany, over half of those seen now at Project Equinox are homeless, not runaways. The shelter's capacity to meet a growing demand is diminished because of longer lengths of stay -- there simply is no place to refer their guests. Seven kids were turned away in a single week in April 1983. In New York City, where homeless youth shelters regularly run at well beyond capacity, one of every fourteen new applicants at the public shelter for men is under twenty-one. A shelter in Buffalo reports seeing more homeless youths coming from families breaking up under the pressure of economic hardship.

In some areas, requiring a name or immediate notice to one's parents of one's whereabouts deters homeless youngsters from availing themselves of proffered services. Most emergency shelters report little success in reuniting children with their families. One reported that positive parental response to such overtures may be forthcoming in the interest of retaining welfare benefits, with no real accommodation ever ensuing.

A large increase in the number of young pregnant girls who have been ejected from their homes has been seen in Haverhill. In Brockton, which is experiencing a "dramatic increase" in the numbers of individuals seeking shelter, there are no facilities for adolescents or adolescent mothers. In the Peabody region, teenagers especially young, pregnant women with no family supports and young men

lacking job skills form an increasing proportion of the homeless. There are no emergency shelters in Quincy. Young jobless men are either referred to Boston shelters, or may seek lodging at the police station.

Part of the problem, as noted earlier with respect to battered spouses, is a rising incidence of child abuse prompting minors to elect the streets as a preferable, safer alternative. Others may be recent "graduates" of foster care programs which make little provision for either the personal skills or material resources a young person needs to make it on his or her own. Others, at least in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, are retained in foster care settings, even through they are ready to assume independent living, because no affordable housing exists.

Restrictive welfare policies may prevent young, able-bodied, but homeless, individuals from securing even a modicum of support against total destitution. Earlier this year, for example, a revision of the General Assistance regulations in Pennsylvania divested relief rolls of all able-bodied persons not otherwise eligible for assistance. No alternative provisions for their livelihood were proposed. As Monsignor John McCarren of Pittsburgh queried:

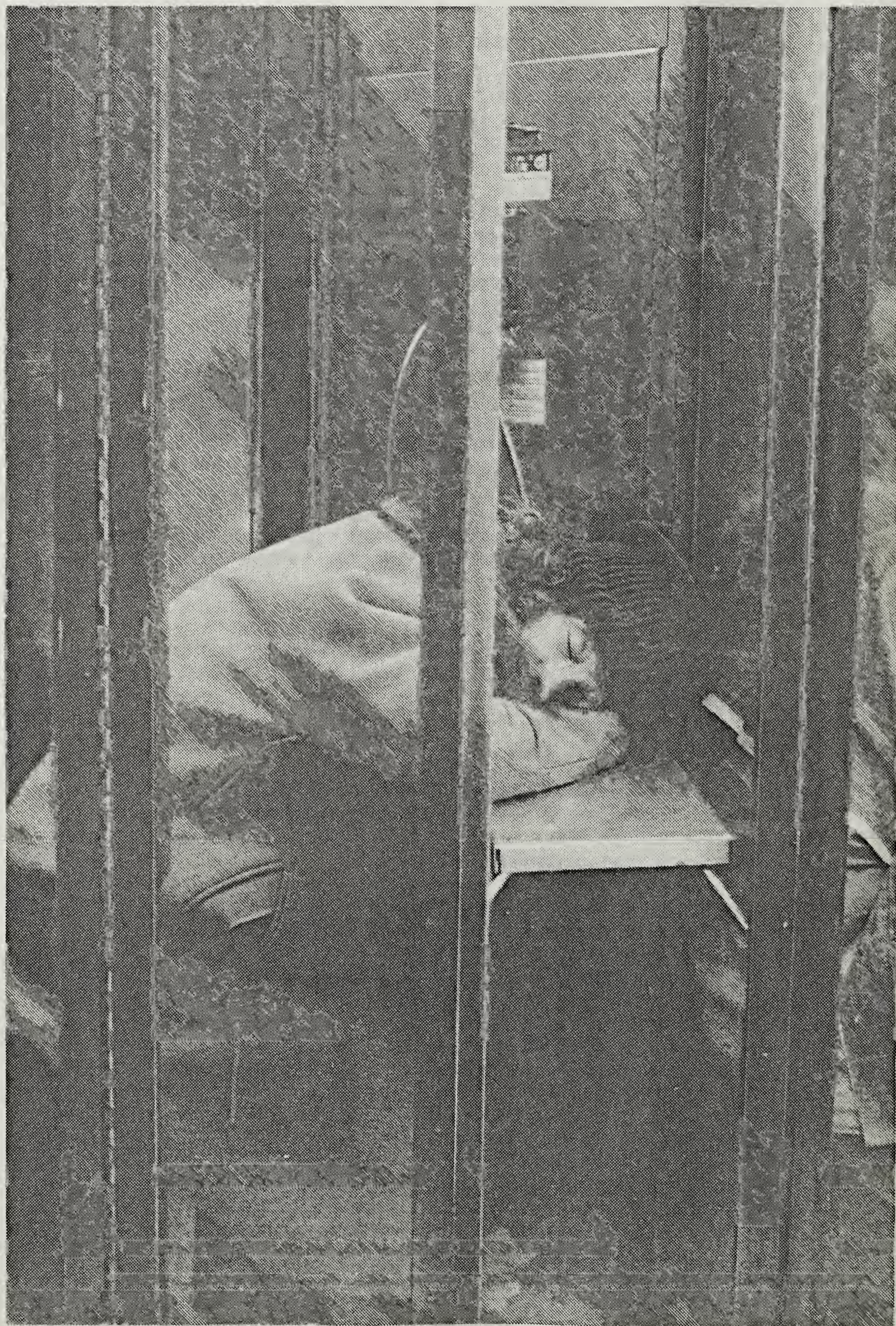
Where will people find jobs? How will they eat?
What are their options? Are we just to write them
off?[157]

The new regulations are currently being challenged in court.

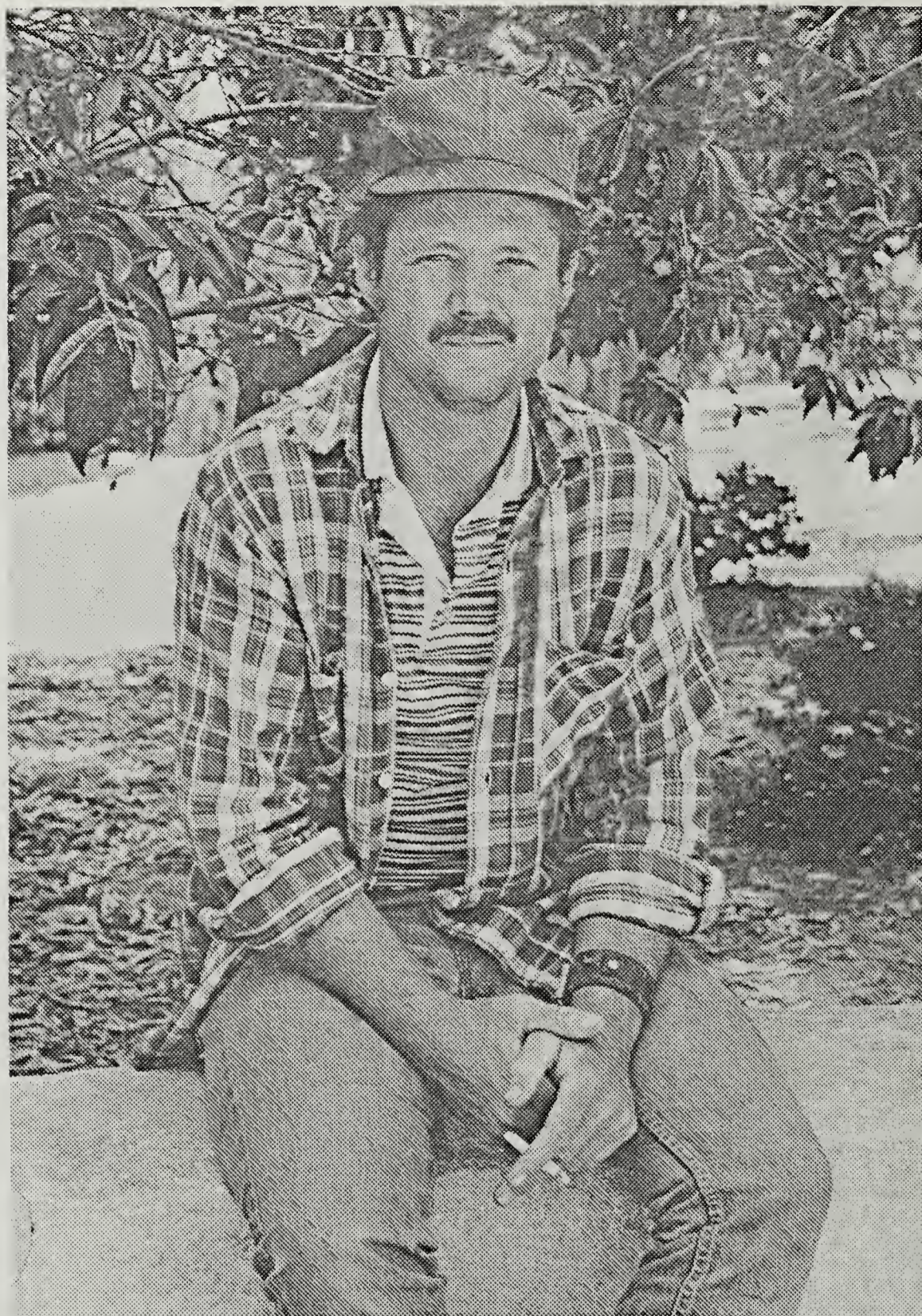
Once out of home, options are few, those that do exist, often hazardous. Some make do for a while with makeshift arrangements. The Office for Children in Fall River, Massachusetts, describes a common problem:

They drift from one friend's home to another [and]
quickly become at risk [of being on the street]
because friends cannot afford to keep them in their
homes indefinitely.[158]

Some band together, picking up a 'partner' or two, cadging spot work where available, sleeping rough or setting up quarters in abandoned buildings when possible. Others are less fortunate and quickly become either adept at petty thievery or prey to better organized rackets. A nineteen-year-old woman in San Francisco, on and off the streets since she was twelve, considers herself lucky: "I haven't had to hook yet." She survives by panhandling and by trafficking in speed. Sometimes, her brother, a night clerk in a nearby hotel, can offer her a bed for the night. Otherwise, she sleeps under the freeways, often in the company of a clutch of similarly situated friends. It's safer that way, she explains.



P O R T R A I T S



A skilled butcher for many years, this man was laid off when a number of meat packing houses were closed down in Phoenix. Headed west for California looking for work. Now sleeping in a park in San Diego. Arrested once for "illegal lodging" and jailed for five hours. Only source of income now is selling scrap aluminum cans he collects. Photographed while waiting for a sandwich drop which the Salvation Army does on Sundays.



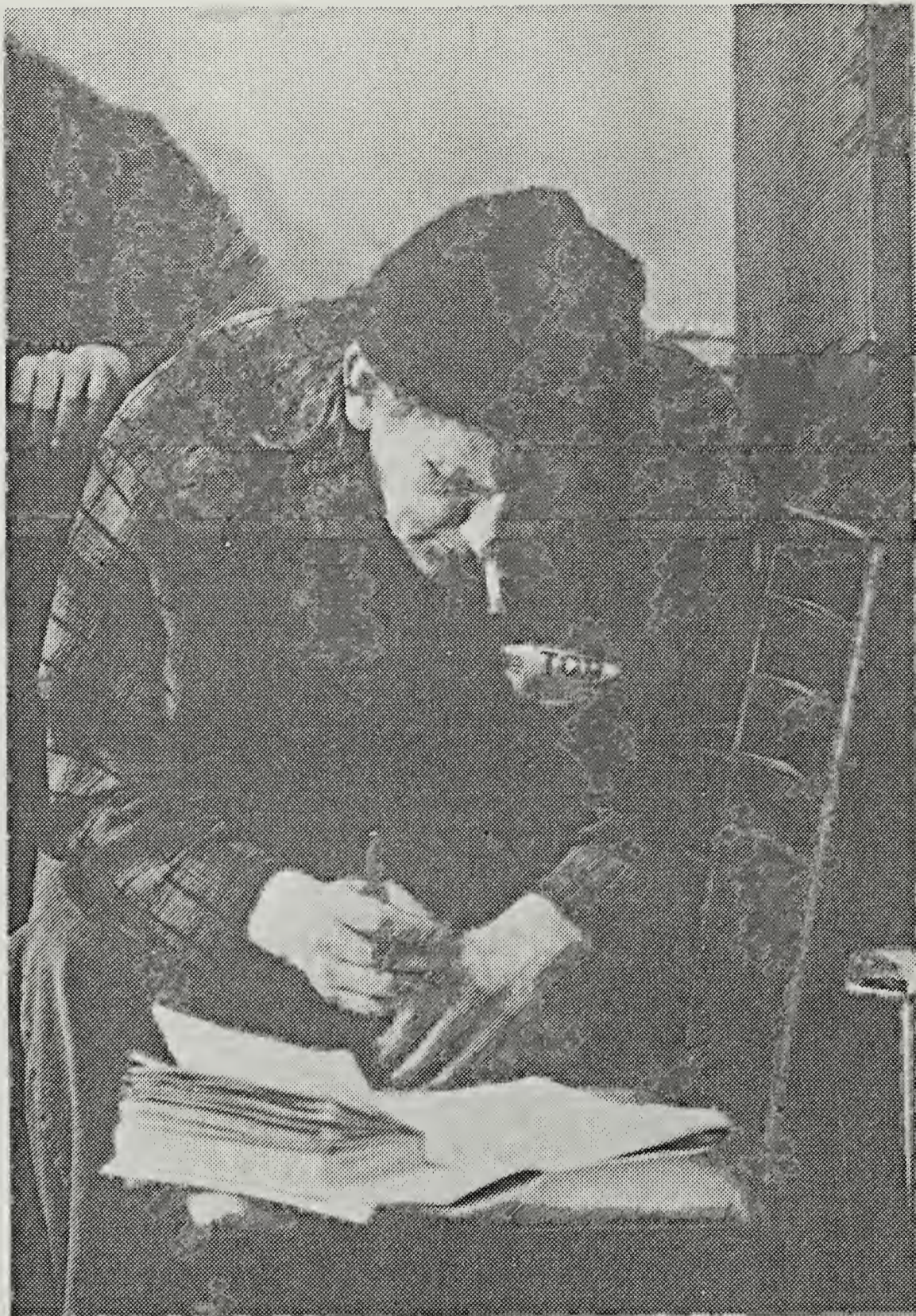
This couple and the young man's sister and mother spent the winter of 1981-82 living under a freeway, after being evicted from the abandoned building they were occupying with up to twenty-five others. They had a tent and couch set up, cooked over fires and drew water from a gas station. Mother had been cut off from SSI, despite a severe deformity in her right leg. "Her worker said he didn't know how come she was thrown off, that it was a mistake," but she's not been able to get back on since. Mother eventually got on General Assistance, moved out from under the bridge. Soon to be re-hospitalized to have a pin removed from her leg.



This family, photographed in the parking lot of the Transient Aid Center in Phoenix, left Anaheim in June after both parents lost jobs. Father is a mechanic, specializing in recreational vehicles; his shop folded. Mother is an electronics instructor; her last job of six months ended when the program was cut back. They stayed for a while -- household, three children and a dog -- at a nearby private campground, but at \$11 a night, were rapidly depleting their meager supply of funds. Moved to a shopping center parking lot; the whole family sleeps in their Jeep Wagoneer. Mother has found part-time work as a telex operator through a temporary jobs agency so family is able to eat on its own. Hopes to have her assignment renewed. Won't go to shelters because they were told the family would have to be split up.



Seventy year old former house painter, waiting for Salvation Army soup kitchen to open. "I made my Social Security and my pension, but for what I can get for \$250 a month, I do just as well to sleep in a box car." Travels steadily.



After a meeting of the Homeless Caucus in San Francisco, this man provided a rapid-fire history of the loss of low-income housing in the city, complete with scholarly references, legal citations and analysis of the rigged composition of city planning boards. Not currently homeless himself, he collects disability, lives in a hotel in the Tenderloin and has so far successfully resisted efforts of landlords to evict him.

A NATIONAL POLICY TO OVERCOME
HOMELESSNESS



Shantytown - 12th Avenue and 40th Street, New York City. Photograph, Circa 1929, Courtesy of the New York Historical Society, New York City.

Many Americans must depend in varying degree on the greater community, whatever the prevailing economic trends. In the current environment of high unemployment rates, severe shortages of affordable housing, cutbacks in federal expenditures, reviews of social security disability benefits and deinstitutionalization have exacerbated the problems of the poor and contributed to the dramatic increase in homelessness across our Nation.

I am deeply disturbed by the number of homeless people living on the streets and in the shelters of our cities. Their treatment is a measure of our compassion and a test of our commitment to the ideals of justice, fairness and human dignity. Since 1949, a major goal of the National Governor's Association has been to provide "a decent home and a suitable living environment for all Americans." With more than two million of our fellow Americans living on the streets of our cities and towns, we are clearly a long way from our goal. In fact, we now face the worst crisis of homelessness since the Great Depression.

A number of states, local governments and voluntary associations have begun to construct networks of residences and services for the growing numbers of homeless individuals. Several states have initiated specialized medical, mental health and addiction control services for the homeless. However, we have not done nearly enough and the situation is worsening.

Emergency food and shelter programs are essential in the short term to meet the most immediate life-threatening needs of people with nowhere to go. But these shelters must be open around the clock throughout the year. They must offer refuge tailored to the special circumstances of the homeless. They must provide food, personal hygiene facilities, and transportation as needed. As important, they must be designed as temporary stops on the way to a more stable way of life for homeless individuals and families. Referral and access to job training and placement, and income maintenance services are essential aspects of a shelter program which offers hope for the future.

In that regard, it would be helpful if the Administration in Washington would provide flexibility in the existing emergency assistance program and recognize that it cannot be a one time only commitment.

Emergency food and shelter are essential but they do not deal with the fundamental causes of homelessness. Longer term solutions are needed, including a careful review of a variety of public and private policies which contribute, sometimes indirectly, to the creation and perpetuation of homelessness.

Each state, in my judgment, should establish a mechanism -- similar to the task forces already in effect in several states -- to subject existing policies to close, unforgiving scrutiny. Specifically, the following areas are in need of review, and, if found wanting, revamping:

1. adequacy of the number and quality of emergency shelters for single men and women, for families, for victims of domestic violence, and for youth;
2. adequacy of existing regulations and enforcement procedures to ensure minimal levels of decency in such facilities;
3. adequacy of discharge planning and aftercare -- including appropriate residential placement -- in psychiatric facilities;
4. adequacy and fairness of shelter and basic living allowances for those on public assistance;
5. adequacy and fairness of general relief regulations, especially as they affect the single, able-bodied man or woman;
6. adequacy and fairness of current housing policies; especially as they affect low-income individuals;
7. adequacy and effectiveness of monitoring and review procedures to ensure that government does not lose touch with the people affected by its policies.

At the federal level, a national commission, similar to the task forces established at the state level is needed to identify existing problems and possible solutions.

At the same time, we must do more than simply study the problem.

There are actions that we can take today.

I would urge each state to undertake a program, similar to the one recently initiated in New York, to provide capital funding for permanent housing for the homeless, bolstered by supportive social services as needed.

Even as we appeal to the federal government, we cannot wait for it to act. Let us move vigorously and expeditiously on our own, in the expectation that Washington will see and respond to the justice of our efforts.

But respond it must. The dimensions of homelessness are national and they require action at the national level.

First, we need jobs. In many of our major cities, thousands of people who want to work cannot find jobs and have been out of work for long periods of time. Despite the recent "upturn," the unemployment rate in our cities and rural areas continues at double digit rates. We need a massive federal jobs program -- providing work for those with the necessary skills and training for those whose job skills are obsolete or non-existent.

Second, we must establish a national housing program for low income individuals and families. This should be two-pronged: a program to fund the construction of permanent housing; and a rent-subsidy program similar to Section 8. While such a program will be expensive, it is certainly as affordable and more sensible than the MX missile or the B-1 bomber.

Third, for those people who, in the absence of public works programs cannot find work, who cannot work, we must provide income assistance sufficient to obtain decent, stable housing. It makes no sense to provide emergency shelter to remedy the problems of existing homeless, if we take no action to prevent future additions to the ranks of the homeless.

Fourth, the agencies involved in assisting the mentally ill must work together to address the basic living and clinical needs of the psychiatrically disabled. Specifically, we must make the concept of supportive residences a workable, growing reality.

Finally, the problems of the homeless cannot be solved by one level of government or indeed government alone.

The concept of family is a symbol I have used in New York to express the need for all of us to work together to solve our common problems and to help those who cannot help themselves. To solve the problems of homelessness, we will need the cooperative efforts of not only every level of government but also voluntary and non-profit organizations, religious groups and individual volunteers. Without a cooperative family effort, we will not be able honestly to say "Never Again."



Shantytown - 12th Avenue and 40th Street, New York City. Along Hudson River - Unemployed men's shacks built by themselves. Photograph, Circa 1929, Courtesy of the New York Historical Society, New York City.

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Note that other definitions are currently in effect, among them:

Missouri includes those in public or private shelters or in subsidized motel accommodations, as well as those "requesting separate housing as opposed to congregate shelter" -- the latter including abused spouses and those displaced as a result of housing code enforcement.

North Dakota refers to "adult men, women and families who have no identifiable personal unshared place of residence" (emphasis in original) -- while noting that "the 'homeless' are mainly housed in the homes of friends or relatives and, to a lesser extent, in private facilities such as hotels/motels."

Most states responding agreed with the definition offered by the survey form: "adult men, women and families who have no identifiable place of residence" which, notably, excludes homeless youth.

31. Agee, Let Us Now Praise Famous Men, p. xiv.
32. Washington Post, December 15, 1982.
33. The following items, unless otherwise indicated, may all be found in the published record of the hearings, Homelessness in America (reference 1).
34. Homelessness in America, p. 149.
35. Homelessness in America, p. 383.
36. Homelessness in America, p. 475.
37. Homelessness in America, p. 91.
38. Homelessness in America, p. 442.
39. Homelessness in America, p. 70.
40. Summary of Shelter Space and Homeless Persons, Birmingham, Alabama. July 11, 1983. On file at the National Coalition for the Homeless, New York.
41. Homelessness in America, pp. 131-145.
42. Compare Nels Anderson's account of the results of a psychiatric examination of men at the Municipal Lodging House in 1931:

"In the main, those men were found to be, not rebellious or radical, but apathetic, cooperative, although indifferent. In very few cases were they bitter or resentful...Most of them have endured several months of unemployment and faced the prospect of unemployment for an indefinite period of weeks, and probably months. And facing such an uncertain future, the prevailing attitude of these men was calm passivity."

- Report on the Municipal Lodging House of New York City, 2 vols., New York: Welfare Council of New York City, Research Bureau, April 1932, p. 158.

Two years after the examinations were conducted, Matthew Josephson reported in the pages of The Nation:

"Most of the men who have been taken in out of the streets seem to grow numbed and submissive in these lodging houses. They have no fight in them. They say: 'We don't dare complain. We're afraid of being hired out.' They would rather not take part in radical demonstrations, hunger marches and such things; they have a pretty clear notion that the authorities might find out and show displeasure with them."

- "The Other Nation," The Nation, May 17, 1933, p. 15.

43. Youngstown Vindicator, January 25, 1983. By mid-February in Youngstown, the St. Vincent de Paul Society had also opened a soup kitchen and the local Rescue Mission had expanded its facilities to serve women and families (Youngstown Vindicator, January 31, February 17, 1983.)

In New York City, a homeless woman recently gave voice to what many of her company feel when suddenly confronted by cameras stationed at a soup line: "Must opt for going hungry. Some stay, pulling their caps way down over their faces or hide behind newspapers.... Afterwards, people talk. Some try to justify their circumstances and their worth. The embarrassment of public exposure takes different forms. But usually it's anger."

- Safety Network, Newsletter of the Coalition for the Homeless, local edition, July 1983.

44. Meltzer, Brother, Can You Spare A Dime?, p. 95; Safety Network, local edition, June 1983.

45. P. Sexton, "The Life of the Homeless," Dissent, Winter 1983, p. 82.
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47. H. Waddell, The Wandering Scholars, London: Constable, 1927.

Even here, the suspicion that some beggars posing as friars were in reality frauds, and the occasional association of mendicant bands with peasant revolt, led Martin Luther in his 1528 Liber Vagatorum to warn against the practice. (Sexton, "Life of the Homeless," p. 80).
48. J. M. Crouse, Transiency in New York State: The Impact of the Depression Decade, 1929-1940, Ph.D. Dissertation, 1980, courtesy of the author.
49. P. T. Ringenbach, Tramps and Reformers, 1873-1916, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973, p. 13.
50. Anderson, Report on the Municipal Lodging House in New York City, p. 164.
51. R. Bruns, Knights of the Road, New York: Methuen, 1980, p. 8.
52. Ibid.; Cf. Crouse, Transiency in New York State.
53. N. Anderson, Men on the Move, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940.
54. J. L. Hagen, "Whatever Happened to 43 Elizabeth I, c.2?" Social Service Review, 56: 108-119, 1982.
55. Quoted by Peter Carlin, "Social Outcasts: The Tramp in American Society: 1873-1910." Paper delivered before the American Historical Association, 28 December, 1979, p. 4.
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59. G. Orwell, Down and Out in Paris and London, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1961. (Originally published in London, 1933.)
60. D. A. Hinzpeter, "Lullaby of Broadway," Working Papers, 9: 58-60, 1982.

61. T. Cook and G. Braithwaite, "A Problem for Whom?" in T. Cook, editor, Vagrancy: Some New Perspectives, New York: Academic Press, 1979, p. 7.
62. Literary Digest, June 8, 1929, p. 32.
63. WPA Guide to New York City, New York: Pantheon (reissue), 1982.
64. D. Rothman, "The Poor in the Great Depression," in J. A. Garraty, editor, Historical Viewpoints, vol. 2, New York: Harper and Row, 1979, p. 300.
65. Better Times (New York's Welfare Magazine), vol. 3, No. 2, February 1922, p. 32.
66. Rothman, "The Poor in the Great Depression," p. 301.

A contemporary observer concurred with specific reference to the subject at hand: "The whole social work movement of recent times with its program of individualization, increased standards, case work principles, relationships, job opportunities, etc., has passed over the homeless situation."

- I. Seligson, The Case of the Homeless Man in New York City, New York School of Social Work, 1940.

67. M. Josephson, excerpted in Meltzer, Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?, pp. 87-88.
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69. Rothman, "The Poor in the Great Depression," p. 302.
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The flavor of what unrest did occur is conveyed by Mauritz Hallgrew's article, "Grave Danger in Detroit":

"Genuine rebellion is smoldering here.... the sympathies of the worker and the lower middle class, which a year ago were all for law and order, have now swung around to the unemployed and their leaders. When relief for the unemployed is reduced or cut off for a day or two, feeling among the disappointed and hungry applicants rises to fever pitch. There have been minor riots and threats of

worse disturbances. Petty thievery is increasing. Windows of small retail shops are smashed at night and relieved of their goods. Children from the poorer districts have taken to snatching bundles from customers coming out of grocery stores. They run off to barren homes with their booty or eat it themselves in out-of-the-way alleys. More frequently, grown men, usually in twos and threes, enter chain stores, order all the food they can possibly carry, and then walk quickly out without paying."

- The Nation, August 3, 1932, p. 99.

71. Rothman, "The Poor in the Great Depression," p. 303.
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77. Bahr, Skid Row, p. 120.
78. L. Stark, "On the 'Deserving' New Poor," Paper delivered before the Arizona Public Health Association, May 20, 1983.
79. B. Paul, Testimony Before the House Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development, Homelessness in America, p. 695.
80. R. T. LeGates and C. Hartman, "Displacement," Clearinghouse Review, 15: 207-249, 1981; and S. V. Kasl, A. Ostfeld, G. M. Brody, et al., "Effects of 'Involuntary' Relocation on the Health and Behavior of the Elderly," 2nd Conference on the Epidemiology of Aging, edited by S. G. Haynes and M. Feinleib, U. S. Dept. Health and Human Services, 1980, pp. 211-236.
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89. Among states responding to the NGA survey as of mid-May 1983, the median rate of increase in the unemployment rate over the past three years was 49%.
90. Corpus Christi Caller-Times, March 4, 1983.
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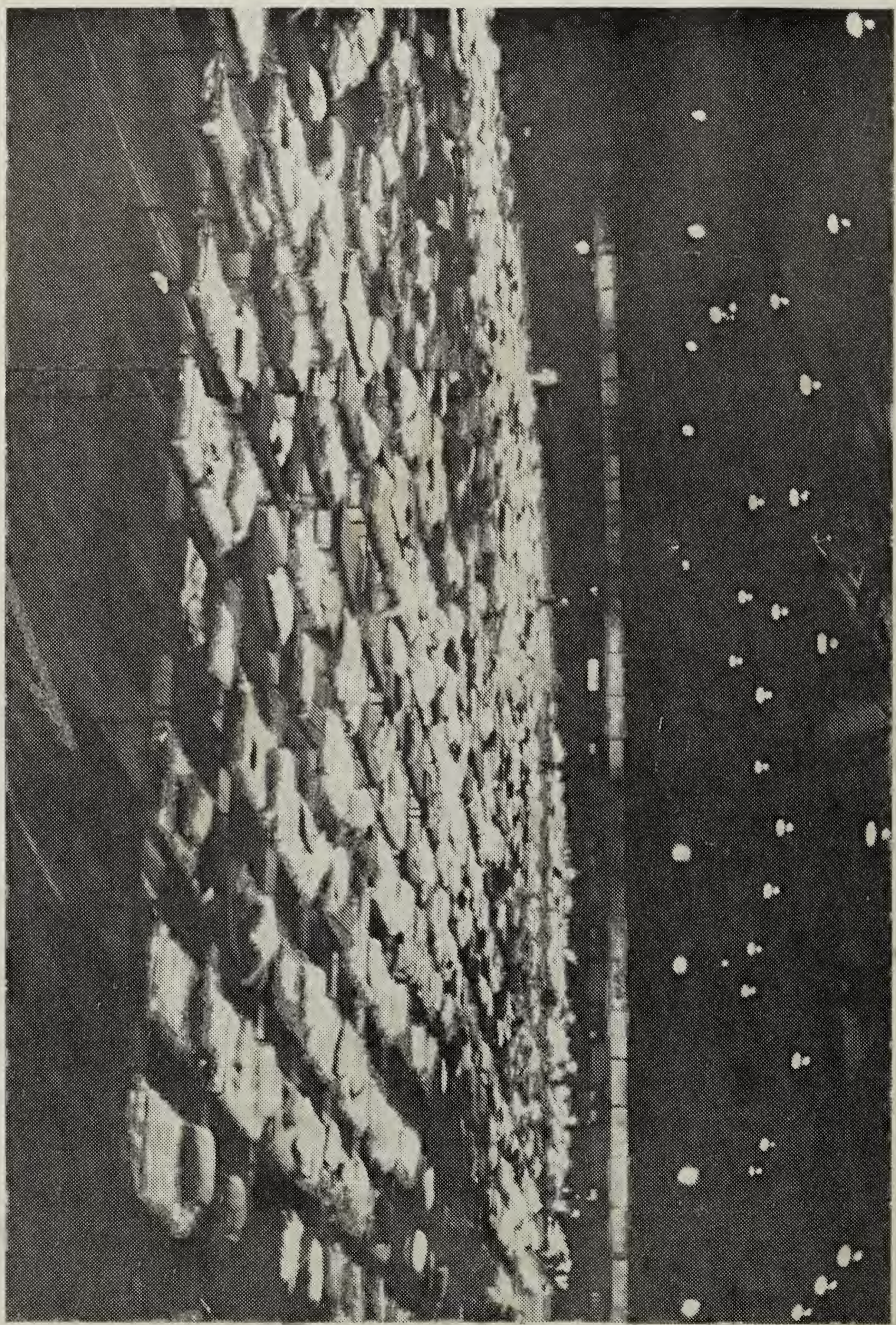
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FRONT COVER: Phoenix, Arizona, July 1983.

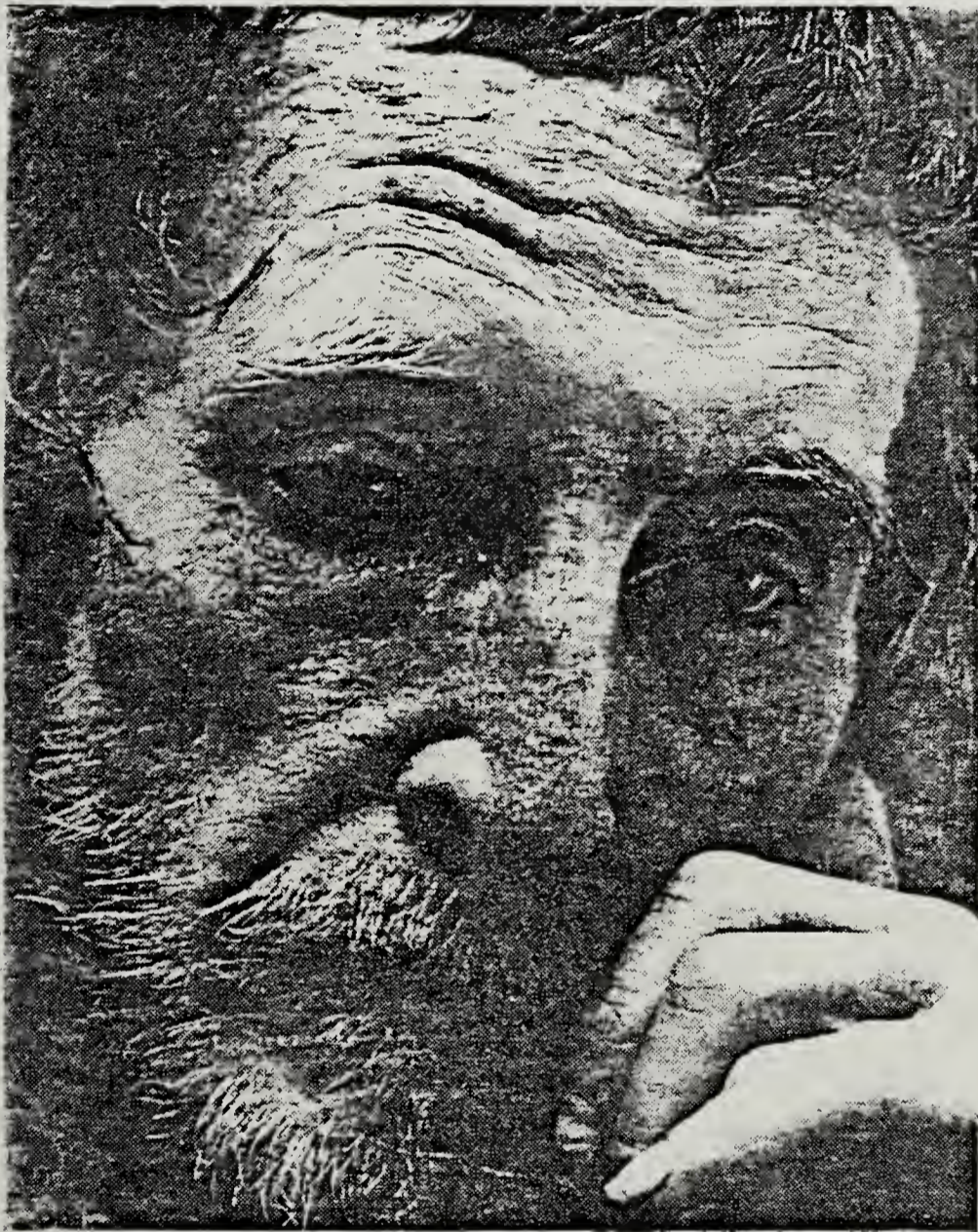
BACK COVER: Fort Washington Armory converted into an emergency shelter for homeless men.
New York City, October 1982.





HOMELESS at HOME

A PUBLIC PROJECT
DESIGN PACKAGE II



STOREFRONT

Art and Architecture

Kyong Park/Glenn Weiss 51 Prince, New York, NY 10012 212-431-5795

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

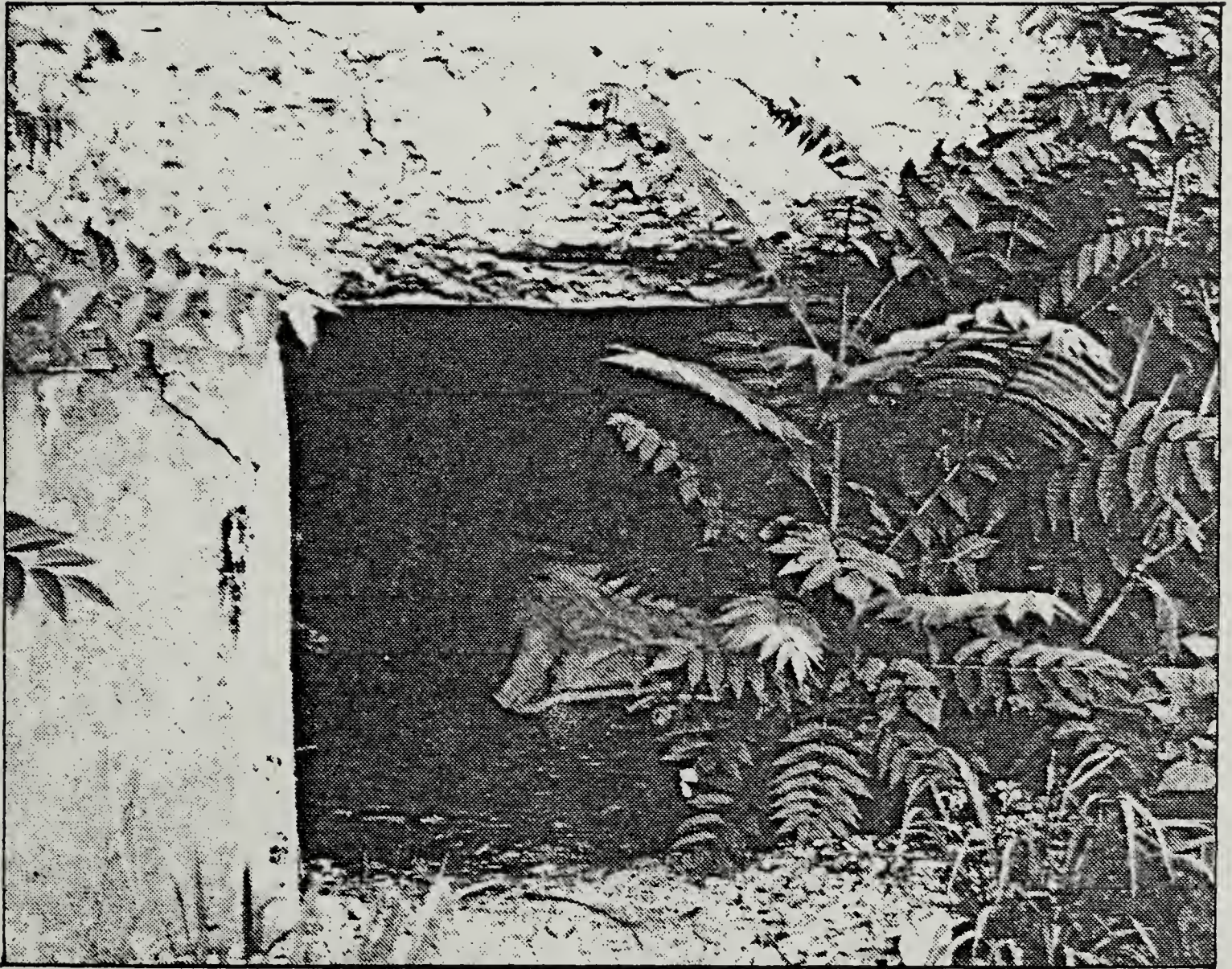
The following people have contributed to this project thus far and to this Design Package on a strictly volunteer basis and have devoted enormous energy and time to its realization. Each of their individual contributions was important and necessary to the whole - whether it was expressed as thought, word and/or deed.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

by

Jean-Francois Blassel and Rosemary Cellini

The HOMELESS AT HOME Project originated from the sense that dignity and justice are denied to the homeless population of our cities. It is also our belief that, as members of society, artists and architects have the responsibility to serve humanity at large, find meanings beyond technology and commercialism and embody them in physical manifestations for human use, contemplation and inspiration. As part of this project, your proposals will increase public awareness and understanding of the homeless people's plight, create support for them and spark the implementation of solutions to their situation.

But good intentions are not sufficient. As artists and architects, few or none of us have had a life experience which gives us clues as to what being homeless means. We have, therefore, collected and assembled information regarding homelessness which should enable you to develop an educated and sensitive response to the problem.

Your responses are part of a dialogue between you, the participant, us, the STOREFRONT, and, ultimately, the public. We have provided you with information regarding homelessness and, you, in turn, are requested to provide us with definitions and redefinitions of Home developed as a result of your personal investigations. The necessity for these definitions and redefinitions emerged when it was realized that the problem of homelessness cannot be addressed without also reexamining the meaning and value of Home within our culture.

The idea of Home as a primordial need for human existence can and should be explored in its multiple dimensions. Home is not simply a place, a shelter or a house. It is both more intimately personal and cosmological. For instance, one could ask oneself what qualities Home should have for a person to reacquire the sense of belonging, lost as result of homelessness. Or perhaps, one could investigate Home, not as an isolated phenomenon, but as an element of the fabric of the city - its other homes, workplaces and human institutions.

Your particular point of departure will lead you on a unique path. However, we suggest below general areas of investigation which may serve you:

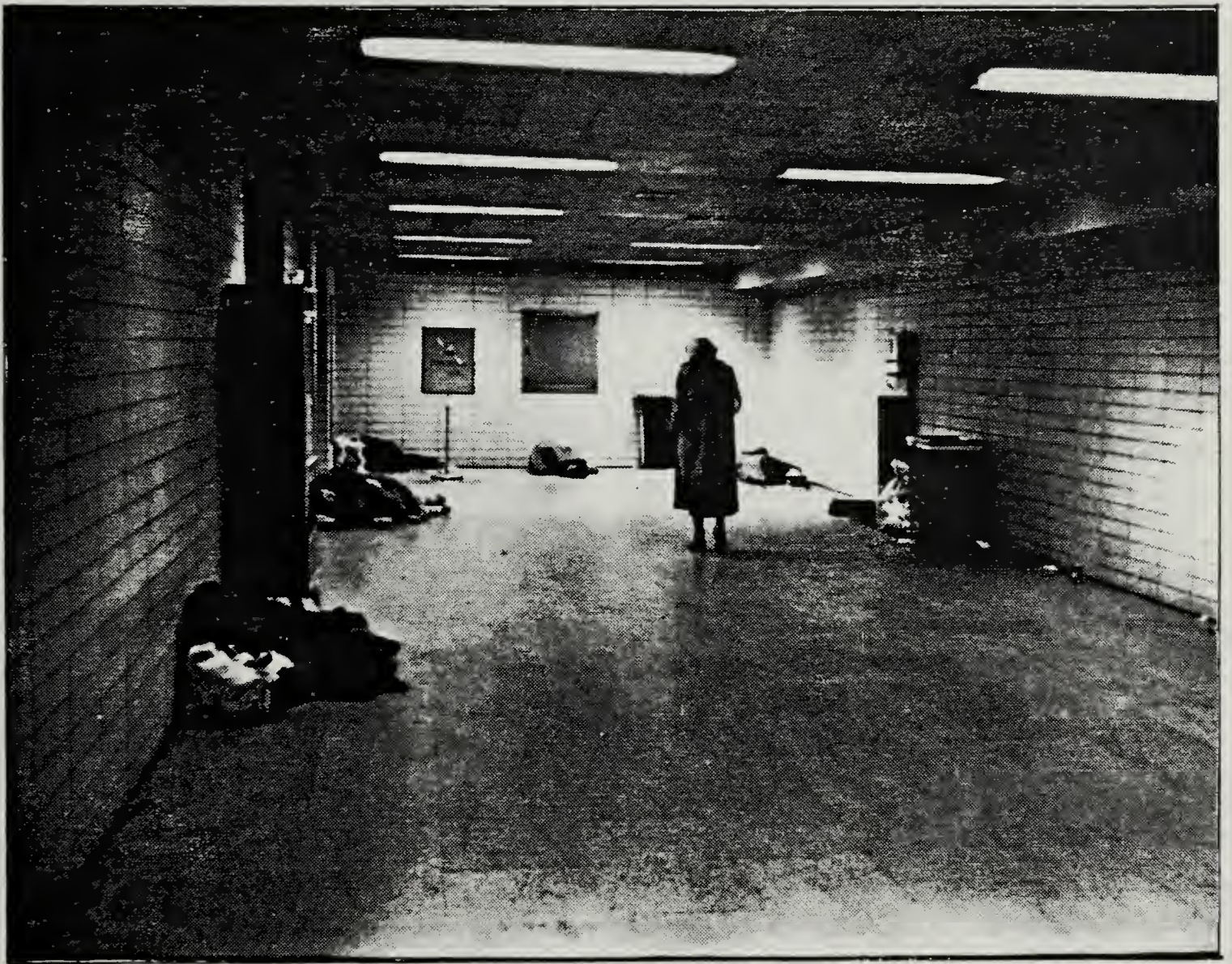
- an immediate improvement upon one of the existing concepts of housing for the homeless, such as temporary shelters, residences, soup kitchens, single room occupancy hotels, drop-in centers, the streeters...
- the idea of Home as fundamental to human existence and the development of an idea of Home as a final solution to homelessness...
- the existence of a man with and/or without a Home as a means to influence the design and construction of future housing

for the homeless and the population in general...

- the position of society and culture regarding the issue of homelessness/homefulness, i.e., political consciousness, public motivation, reassessment of laws, legislative advocacy, etc...

It is our hope that the information in this Design Package will lead you to identify and define the meaning and value of Home and create works which will make these meanings and values available to the public for its support and implementation..

We look forward to receiving and exhibiting your proposals. Good Luck!



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STATEMENTS

HOMELESS BOUND
By
Patricia C. Phillips

"Each person, withdrawn into himself, behaves as though he is a stranger to the destiny of others."

Alexis de Tocqueville

Homelessness is a condition that exists throughout the world. It is a psychological and physical sentence where release, in most situations, is undetermined and unpredictable. While it is the problematic fate of some, its corrosive impact is a destiny for all of us. We are all public beings and homelessness diminishes our belief in the promise of a public life.

There is a literature and lore of people without permanent shelter, with rootless and migratory lives. In the United States this restlessness and rejection of home and community is related to a frontier ethic which coaxed the adventurer into the wilderness. It is the drive which made it possible for a new culture and civilization to settle and use the vast resources of the American continent. The idea of home had to be forgotten or suppressed to create an agrarian state from a romantic ideal. In the late 19th and early 20th century living without home was best typified by the hobo and hobohemia. In the classic study of the sociology of the homeless man, The Hobo, Nels Anderson documented a lost life style of men who turned from home and family to drift around the country following new and usually short-term work opportunities. Hobos helped to build the railroads, to dig the mines, to skin the mules. Restlessness had to be matched by resourcefulness. In his study which chronicles his life as a hobo as well as his observations as a university professor of a more general condition, Anderson emphasized that homelessness for the hobo or vagabond was an act of choice and affirmation. And when the going got rough and the years began to take a toll, settling down -- home -- was normally an option.

Homelessness is a profound problem for everyone with the exception of those who choose this course. It is important (as an aside) that, in any grand and optimistic plan to address this issue, the rights and desires of these individuals also be considered. But, of course, this group is small and the problem of homelessness in every city and community is vast and growing fast. To be rootless without choice confounds both hope and courage prolonging and exacerbating the situation.

The idea of home in its physical and architectural manifestation has become increasingly diverse. A home can be single family house, a commune, a tent, a condominium. It can be an isolated structure or a unit in a huge complex, a provisional shelter or permanent dwelling. While architecture can assist in the plight of the homeless, it is a small factor in the identification of home. I suspect that gypsies and

nomads have a very strong sense of home that is, in fact, enriched by a migratory lifestyle. Home is found in the sense of collective well-being, in comradeship, in the progression of life directed by opportunity, climate, and culture. Home is first of all a psychological region which is sustained by artifice and a connection to a compassionate community.

A sense of home permits people to be private beings. Their most meagre possessions and spartan setting can satisfy the need for solitude, privacy, and intimacy. People are refreshed by the cyclical affirmation of being able to go home, to seek a haven from the world, to construct the poetics of a personal space, to enjoy the illusion of control. Home is the setting for the series of private rituals which invigorate people to be public beings.

Homelessness erodes the potential of a rich and challenging public life for all of us. For the homeless, their condition confirms a disbelief in the promise of a generous and great society; and for all of us, this breach of responsibility causes a great withdrawal from and resistance to public activity. Homelessness is a disgrace from which there is no exemption. The United States was once a nation of refuge; to retract from this legacy undermines common destiny and a productive public life.

By
Sarah Williams

We must ask ourselves what it is like to live without a home in a modern city without a home, because only then will we know what in shelter is essential. Most simply, a home is the place where we return everyday, sleep every night. This very consistency makes home the spatial and psychological vantage point from which we experience a city. When we walk outside we are Leaving Home. When we see other buildings, we think (consciously or unconsciously), how does it differ from where I live? Home is the physical center from which all understanding of a city radiates: a home orders the world.

Being homeless means that this order is exploded. Attempts by the homeless to colonize a given space are relentlessly thwarted; they are victims of the vicissitudes of weather, publicity, psychological disorientation, a transit cop here, an unexpectedly full shelter there. A homeless person experiences his city in fragments, incident by incident; as a result, the physical environment becomes a psychological chaos of menace and illogic.

Memory and imagination are the only tools a homeless person has to prevent the city from becoming a dadaistic irrationality. Memories of childhood dwellings contribute vastly to the making of any home; perhaps an adult, sleeping wherever, still has access to these spaces. Imagination helps because urban dwellers organize the city partly by holding in their mind's eye its aerial view--no matter how confusing a city is, one can create some sense of order by picturing the lines of its grid.

With such tools even a homeless person can make some sense of the urban environment. But neither memory nor imagination provide the essential center. Memory is useful only if childhood spaces can be revised, and partially recreated; otherwise it is agent only to free-floating nostalgia. And the imagined grid serves no centering function unless there is on it a point of reference so familiar that it can be the space at which one--quite unconsciously--starts translating two dimensions into three. Otherwise, the grid remains a geometric abstract.

The homeless are without a center, and chaos threatens. When thinking about shelter imagine a space that can be colonized. One is not enough. Take stock of a city, design a network of shelters which serve small groups of homeless, places where they can return. Such a program (say, one shelter in every school district) has obvious additional benefits. Neighborhood shelters would enable the homeless to develop some familiarity with personnel, short-circuiting the tendency of staff to infantilize anonymous wards. Also, the homeless themselves could build their own community, since consistency of contact will build bonds of trust, and encourage each to help the other.

Consistency makes a spatial (thus psychological) center. But does

consistency alone make a center a home? Of course not. In a city (perhaps anywhere), what defines center from non-center is that thin black line, a wall. Inside these walls is privacy, where we collect ourselves, consider our past, imagine our power. So shelter is not only the spatial and psychological locus from which we organize our immediate world, the city; but also the place where we arrive at a relationship to our history and our hopes. Only when such contemplation is possible can a person develop autonomy: "The most important thing in every man's life is shelter," one homeless man told an interviewer. "Once you have shelter, then you are able to get yourself together, then you are able to develop an idea of how you can get yourself out of the trouble you are in."

Privacy is a complicated word: In a city we are never alone. Someone can always knock, telephone, turn up the volume on "Dallas", slip Jehovah's Witness pamphlets under the door. Physical privacy is always illusory. So for an architect sheltering the homeless the question becomes: What elements are necessary to help this illusion thrive?

The most essential part of privacy is the simple fact of not being held responsible for one's public self. It is not the hiding of oneself, or the insulation of oneself-- for few of us behave outrageously when we are alone, and few of us are bothered much by intrusions of light or noise-- but the simple fact of controlling ingress that empowers.

The other component of privacy is personalization. The environment must be large enough for one to feel that he or she can exert over it some control. A sheet over one's head in a bunk room of 2300 is not enough. But read this description of the Palace Hotel: "All singles. Chicken-wire ceiling, covered with cloth, thin wooden walls--looks like wainscotting, whole place a tinder-box. . . An oddly unfrightening place." Little indeed is necessary to provide the minimum one needs: large enough to personalize, if only by tacking a picture on the wall.

Absolute consistency, the illusion of privacy: these elements make a shelter a home. Without them, one has no space to consider his relationship to the city, the community, the self: life becomes an animalistic succession of reactions to the environmental immediate. Think of contemplation, center, order, control.

HOUSING THE HOMELESS
By
G. Michael Mostoller, AIA

The facts of homelessness are well known. Every central city in the United States is a refuge for poor, unemployed, homeless people. They live and sleep on the sidewalks, streets, hot air grates, station floors, empty lots and parks of the city. Advocacy groups estimate a population of one to two million homeless people in this country. They are different from the stereotypical street people of yesteryear: the wino, the hobo, the "bum." The derelict has been joined by evicted men and women, caught in an amazingly rapid escalation of the real estate market. Families and young, single people increasingly appear on the street. State mental institutions have released tens of thousands of marginal clients to find their own way in the world.

What to do is also clear. We must build houses for people who have none. The forms these houses take is open for debate but several generic options have emerged in working on the problem in the last several years. These alternatives are: 1)overnight, small-scale "hostels"; 2)temporary (six months to a year) transitional apartment buildings; 3)permanent residences. All variations generally should include single room living arrangements, social spaces, activity and counseling rooms.

Why is so little housing being built for the homeless when the need is known and general directions understood? First, this housing problem is part of a larger housing problem. Only one-third of American households can afford new houses or rental costs. As a result, little housing is being built and what is built goes to the wealthy. This situation - the scenario of the Reagan "Age of the Entrepreneur" - pits the middle class against themselves and the poor, as they, the middle class struggle for survival. The marketplace, as a mechanism for housing at least half the people in the United States, is inoperative, even with some allowance for a trickle-down effect.

However, there are other reasons for the failure to build housing for low income people, particularly the homeless. The homeless are seen as the source of problems that will infect a street or neighborhood. The problems include the very visual presence of the homeless which might upset property values, neighborhood tone, and create embarrassment, even fear. Therefore, most attempts to locate housing for the homeless in any neighborhood are resisted.

Another predictable reason for little real action has been bureaucratic ineptitude in dealing with new housing types. This is to be expected and some efforts are now being made by the city and state to overcome this. Financing any effort to house the homeless is also difficult. Banks are more apt to involve themselves in refinancing shakey loans to third world countries. Pension funds and insurance companies have all stayed away. Private investment is an impossibility. This leaves the city and state who have, to some degree, grappled with this problem. But they cannot do much more

unless priorities change.

Our society, the richest in history, simply has other interests, including: national defense, material comfort at the highest possible levels, and entertainment. Housing the poor is not an issue, except for brief moments of media exposure for particularly empathetic situations, usually combined with a gory fiscal expenditure such as the City of New York spending \$1,200.00 per month, per family for housing those homeless in a midtown SRO hotel. And occasionally, a homeless person freezes to death and people are informed by television. Yet little effort is made to solve the problem in any way. Our society mainly reveals itself on this issue as uncaring and preoccupied. It is doubtful that the homeless population will diminish in any significant number in the next five years at the current rate of "affordable" housing starts.

Work is needed to continue to address this immense problem of housing the homeless, including; concepts for building designs, site development and planning, and financing strategies. This effort has barely begun.

An Excerpt From
ACCUMULATIONS BY ARMAN
By
Ted Castle

Thus the science of nations is to be accumulative from father to son, each learning a little more and a little more; each receiving all that was known and adding its own gain: the history and poetry of nations are to be accumulative; each generation treasuring the history and songs of its ancestors, adding its own history and its own songs; and the art of nations is to be accumulative, just as science and history are; the work of living men not superceding, but building itself upon the work of the past.

John Ruskin, POLITICAL ECONOMY

The amount of things in the world is astounding. We are surrounded by things in every situation. Things accumulate around us like sawdust by the sawmill until we are driven to redistribute or destroy them. The accumulation of things is a species-specific custom like murder, laughter and language. Before we know it, each of us accumulates more things than we remember. Hey! Look at this! Remember that? The closets of our minds disclose an order that we can rarely achieve in the houses of our objects where we treasure stuff that has no meaning to anybody else. Anyone who has experienced the death of a beloved person will, in reviewing the "personal effects of the deceased," find thousands of meaningless shards of materials of all kinds, from broken cameras to divorce decrees, testifying to a life activity full of purpose now reduced to a pile of junk. Some of it, of course, can be scavenged into other lives as great museums vie for important collections of teacups and tapestries and as bums spy good clothes cast off on streetcorners, and the way my friends and I often furnish our houses with the detritus of other people. But most of the junk of dead people amounts to a strange paperwork of interests and concerns that we cannot revive, collate or compute--a collection of books in an unknown language full of vowels.

The art object is somewhat of another matter. Here an intention has focused some materials in a certain way to get a picture of a bunch of flowers in a certain color, for example, or to create something like nothing one has seen before, a sort of useless tool--something which can have meaning to more than one and to strangers as well as to lovers and the self, but which has no definite and agreed utility. Such controversial objects--everyone has the right to dislike any kind of art at will--enjoy a special status, whether as points of communication in the arcane value system known as the art world or as possible decorations for your son's bedroom-study.

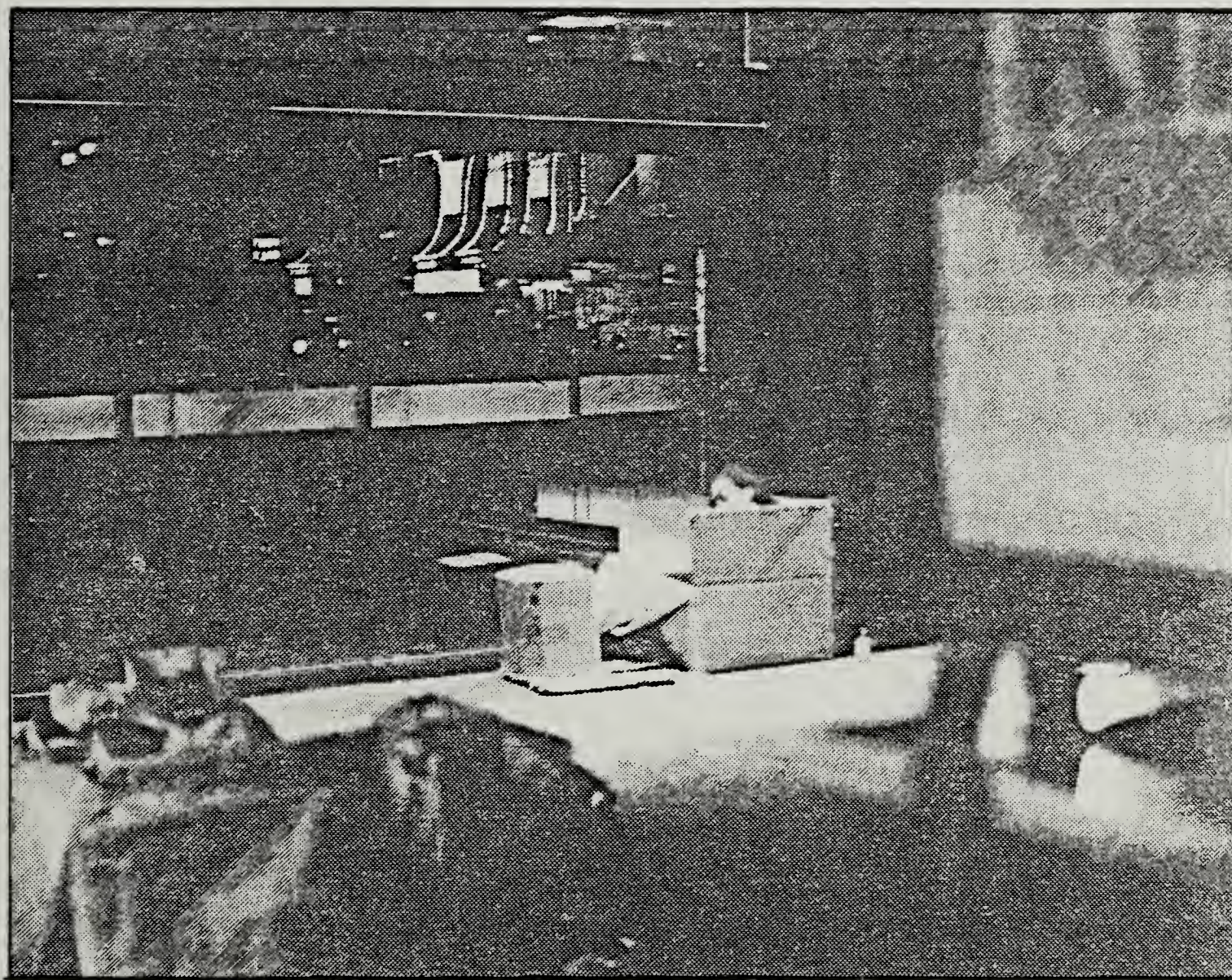
The art object, because of the work of the artist, accumulates within itself an intrinsic value which only dematerialization can disperse. We don't have to agree about art in order to agree that it

has a general worthiness that might prevent us from shredding the portraits of forgotten ancestors and little pictures of violets painted in oil-based pigments or printed on photographic paper. Enormous boxes of snapshots repine in attics and warehouses all over the world waiting hopelessly for somebody with the love of things to redeem them. They fade, get leaked upon by roofs and dusted by the air; then, abandoned by their relatives, rusted, and torn up by desperate mice who hope that Kodak is something to eat, they become indistinguishable parts of the universe again in an absurd or deliberate conflagration of nature and desire.

I can still recall being little and crying myself to sleep at the thought of the waste that goes on in this world. I wanted everyone to have what they wanted, but all this stuff was going to rot and ruin in front of my eyes. I would try to rescue little plants, bring things like snow sleds in out of the rain. To this day, I still rescue nearly abandoned household appliances and repair things that other people feel should be replaced. But I don't collect things very much; I accumulate the minimum amount of things such as books and telephone directory cards and clothes. In my life I depend on experience (which I call friendship) for almost all of my needs. Nevertheless, when I moved house less than two years ago, I was appalled by the amount of objects I was unwilling to abandon and had to cart from one place to the next. Our objects define us, not only in quantity and quality, but just by their existence about us. They define us to ourselves as well as to other people, and defining ourselves is our dearest, most important work in life. You don't have to be an art collector to revere an assortment of otherwise meaningless "tchotchkes", treasured household objects which we think of fondly as we dust and handle them. Our objects make us who we are, I repeat, even to ourselves.....

The following are excerpts from certain of the writings submitted by participants. Their purpose is to initiate a dialogue between participants.

III



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WRITINGS BY PARTICIPANTS



Continued on page 12

Think about unemployment. Think about mental illness. Think about disasters. Think about wars and terrorism. Think about getting old in poverty.

Think about what "home" means. Think of its physical connotations. Think of its emotional connotations. Think about what being without a home means. --

Think about the provision of shelter. Think about shelter in the public sector, shelter in the private sector, and shelter provided by charitable organizations. Think of the connotations of condos, of mansions, of "flophouses" and motel apartments.

Think about who pays for shelter and how. Think about mortgages and income tax deductions for interest payments. Think about landlords and depreciation of property for income tax purposes. Think about rescue missions and "skid row." Think about public housing projects and subsidized rents. Think about tent cities and cardboard box towns under the freeway overpasses.

Think about sleeping on park benches. Think about sleeping in railroad cars. Think about sleeping in doorways or on streetcorners.

Think about bathing in gas station restrooms or in bus stations. Think about carrying all your belongings in a shopping cart, and wearing all your clothes at once. Think about being beat up as you sleep, or arrested. Think about being unable to vote because you don't have an address. Think about not being able to get a job, or unemployment benefits, because you don't have an address ...

Mindy Machanic, East Carolina University

... I see
our bright, shiny and empty buildings at night knowing there are
so many of us without shelter. I think of the greed. There are
people under cardboard in the streets...

Felix Martorano, Brooklyn, New York

For my part, I wish to focus on one sector of the homeless population. Many homeless are forced unwillingly onto the streets due to circumstances such as lack of income, housing, or medical care. But there is also another element within the homeless population which I will call the free spirit, as represented by a strong free will, a desire to reject social conformity and most important, an abhorrence of "institutions." The dramatic social tension between the public will for order and its "institutions," and the individual right of free will and unbridled liberty is most clearly revealed by this specific group of homeless individuals.

My project idea (program and site still to be selected) will try to approach this dilemma of collective will and individual right. How one portrays the final architectural product in my view determines ultimate social effectiveness in a charged ideological climate such as this. The inappropriate use of architectural "character" (how a building looks relative to its use) so that the image of "institution" is evoked, along with its restrictive social agenda, will produce a negative response.

To begin to develop a hypothesis about the appropriate architectural character for such a project, I thus undertook a bit of a review of the historical evolution of the Shelter as Social Institution: The first law respecting the homeless was passed in England in 1349 after the plague had destroyed half the population. It restricted the liberty of homeless people to wander freely because laborers were needed. Later laws forced the homeless into workhouses or even prisons where they were often branded (V for Vagabond) or even executed. These ^{were} based on fears of lawlessness. A harsh attitude towards vagabondage typified official doctrine until the early 19th century.

During that period, the dilemma of the homeless was first treated with conscious regard for the homeless themselves. A scientific approach sought to classify all homeless by types: able-bodied or not, willing to work or not; aged, deranged, etc. The objective of "reform," well-intentioned but imposed from without, evolved, and with it a type, the "house of refuge" (Maison de Refuge), which sought to accomplish rehabilitation, neither by incarceration nor by total freedom.

One very early institution that epitomizes the 19th century solution is Merxplas in Belgium. Designed originally in 1808 as a prototype to be built at a number of locations, it was finally constructed in 1866 by those who were to inhabit it. This institution had a work-ethic philosophy: all should produce according to ability--some forced, some freely, based on character. In exchange, shelter, food, education, and later, if possible, resettlement into the community were promised. A theory of earned self-sufficiency underlay its philosophy. The ultimate goal was uncompromising "reform" of the thinking of the homeless. Yet the imposition of a reformist objective at Merxplas was tempered by an important factor: the inhabitants created the shelter themselves.

"The remarkable institution of Merxplas is valuable as an object-lesson.

There is hardly a trade that is not represented there. The enormous buildings are the work of vagabonds. It is among the vagabonds that were found the architects who drew up the plans for the buildings, the draughtsmen who furnished the designs for their carpets, and the sculptors who modelled the statues that decorated their chapel."

The House of Refuge, typified by Merxplas and later by Le Corbusier's Cité de Refuge, developed as an autonomous type, distinct from the prison or the workhouse, during what are generally considered as two antithetical periods, the 19th century and the modern era. Yet in spite of the differences of the two periods, M. Foucault and others have noted a "continuity of 'panopticism' in such institutions throughout the entire modern period." The House of Refuge in both periods tended to derive its institutional effectiveness from a sense of isolation (hétérotopie) and discipline, attributes that, as A. Vidler and M. Foucault point out, bore a direct correspondence with architectural form.

While the 19th-century Merxplas used biaxial symmetry and architectural hierarchy to separate and organize individuals, Le Corbusier, as B.B. Taylor notes, used both procession and an artificially controlled environment to impose "a pervasive collective discipline upon an individual's . . . social behavior." In both periods an authoritarian ideology, desperate to eliminate what was seen as socially deviant behavior, employed architectural mechanisms to achieve its ends. Truly, "architectural and mechanical engineering formed the complement to the social engineering of redemption to which the Salvation Army aspired."

In contradistinction to the rather precise ideological and architectural theorizing underlying the House of Refuge type in the past two periods, current thought on the subject presents a relatively hazy perspective. For both the House of Refuge of the rural 19th century vagabond (Merxplas), and that of the urban early 20th-century homeless (the Cité de Refuge), there existed a manifest role: the maintenance of a somewhat bourgeois life-style. The forceful architectural image that the institution projected enhanced its ability to convey this objective to its more "resistive" inhabitants.

Today, however, it seems that the greater prevalence of self-assertion and expressions of free-will on the part of many homeless people casts doubt on the validity of the traditional "condensing" function of the institution. It is no longer reasonable to adhere to an architectural authoritarianism such as that accepted in the last century. Rather, a shelter of the 1980's should reflect to the greatest extent possible, values such as the autonomy and civil rights of those for whom it is to be built. Yet the various interests of society and the ethical and aesthetic concerns that arise need to be simultaneously protected. This balancing of interests is the most difficult aspect of producing a proposal.

Christian Cowansage, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

HOMELESS AT HOME

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HOME

home, n. 1. a dwelling place; the place in which one resides; the seat of domestic life and interests; specifically, (a) the house, apartment, etc. where one lives or is living temporarily; living quarters; (b) the region, city, state, etc. where one lives.

2. the place where one was born or reared; one's own city, state, or country; as, let affairs at home be well managed by the administration.

3. the place where something is or has been founded, developed, etc.; the seat.

4. the grave; death

5. the place that is the natural environment of an animal, a plant, etc.; as, the home of the seal or of the eucalyptus.

6. the abiding place of one's affections; a place where one likes to be; restful or congenial place; as, home is where the heart is.

7. a place or institution provided for the needy and the homeless; as, a home for orphans or for veterans.

8. the members of a family; household; as the depression ruined many homes.

9. in some games, the place of beginning and ending, as in baseball, cricket, hare and hounds, etc.; the goal or base

The Shelter for the Homeless attempts to do and to be many things simultaneously; it is both a haven from the city and a microcosmic reflection of it. It addresses various needs of men and women, from the most basic, of physical comfort and security, to that of occupational rehabilitation and spiritual nurturing. It is, most simply, a shelter, like a lean-to, a roof over one's head, a warm place to lay down one's head; the equivalent in the public city is the cardboard box, the recessed doorway, the Grand Central Station tunnels. On the other hand, unlike the city, which disperses its poor among numerous streets and parks, the Shelter is a collector, a rejuvenator, an identity-giver, if the resident wishes, and represents a process through which one may emerge perhaps more nourished, more encouraged, and more anchored in the hope of a return to a more permanent home if one so desires....

Knut Hansen and Helen Rori Yampolski, New York, New York

... It is my opinion that finding solutions to the homeless situation can only move beyond speculation if and when the homeless themselves are included in the solving process. For any given solution to work, it is imperative to first find access to inside information. In this particular situation, such access can be gained solely through the input of the homeless themselves. It is only after this point that the outside speculative information can be placed into proper perspective. Hopefully then, the combination of both inside and outside forces will produce effective and working solutions to this complex situation...

Kim Higgins, New York, New York

There are more than 3 million homeless Americans. A number of U.S. cities have 30,000 to 60,000 homeless inhabitants. They are mostly unconnected people that live on the fringe: A marginal existence with no architecture but for grates, benches, doorways and an occasional shelter.

Contributing factors include the failure to accept Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing with shared common facilities--by the public and by government policy--as a necessary part of the housing stock. National, state and local legislation led to the loss of most of this type of housing.

It has been estimated that the national policy of deinstitutionalization, by failing to provide the legislated community mental health centers, is responsible for roughly 1/3 of the homeless population. Alcoholics account for another 1/3 and the economically disadvantaged, including displaced SRO residents no longer able to afford the cost of housing, represent the final third. Although recent surveys indicate that more than half of this population is in need of psychiatric assistance.

Towards permanently housing the homeless, changes in attitudes and policy are needed to accept SRO's as part of the housing stock. Lessons from government assistance to housing suggest that non-profit organizations often best serve as providers. SRO housing should be community based, on manageable scales, with exclusionary zoning overrides, and with access to needed social services. Active measures could include a gradual elimination of interest deductions on housing, leading to a more equitable distribution of housing resources

Thomas Fodor, Cambridge, Massachusetts

"It is worth saying something about the social position of beggars for when one has consorted with them, and found that they are ordinary human beings, one cannot help being struck by the curious attitude that society takes towards them. People seem to feel that there is some essential^x difference between beggars and ordinary "working" men. They are a race apart--outcasts, like criminals and prostitutes. Working men "work," beggars do not "work"; they are parasites, worthless in their very nature. It is taken for granted that a beggar does not "earn" his living, as a brick-layer or a literary critic "earns" his. He is a mere social excrescence, tolerated because we live in a humane age, but essentially despicable.

Yet if one looks closely one sees that there is no ESSENTIAL difference between a beggar's livelihood and that of numberless respectable people. Beggars do not work, it is said; but, then, what is WORK? A navvy works by swinging a pick. An accountant works by adding up figures. A beggar works by standing out of doors in all weathers and getting varicose veins, chronic bronchitis, etc. It is a trade like any other; quite useless, of course--but, then, many reputable trades are quite useless. And as a social type a beggar compares well with scores of others. He is honest compared with the sellers of most patent medicines, high-minded compared with a Sunday newspaper proprietor, amiable compared with a hirepurchase tout--in short, a parasite, but a fairly harmless parasite. He seldom extracts more than a bare living from the community, and, what should justify him according to our ethical ideas, he pays for it over and over in suffering. I do not think there is anything about a beggar that sets him in a different class from other people, or gives most modern men the right to despise him.

... It is imperative that Architects join hands with other disciplines and work as a team towards advancing "social change". Architects by themselves can not change society. A case in point being the history of the Modern movement in architecture. The intentions were good, the ideals excellent, but we have been forced to recognize that the built environment by itself does not change society or provide a better world ...

As architects we can identify the problem in terms of what the homeless require in physical terms - to keep their body and soul together, in terms of their needs for shelter, for more humane and accessible shelter, but we can not diminish the homeless...

We have investigated the problem of the homeless in St.Louis.

Over 10,000 people were served by St.Louis emergency shelters in 1984. this figure is a 43% increase over the 7,000 people sheltered in 1982.

An average 900 households were (comprised of 2,000 persons) were turned away monthly from emergency shelters in 1984 due to lack of space ...

Mehrdad Haji-Sharifi and Rajeev Kathpalia, St. Louis, Missouri

... Hopefully, in the long range, the implementation of creative socio-economic policies will eliminate the need for "homes" for the homeless. At this point, architects and designers must provide short and medium range solutions for the homeless that coincide with current or projected public policy ...

... With the immediacy of the crisis of the homeless, any design solution must be firmly based in reality rather than theory. The problems of real groups of people in real locations must be addressed...

Paul Connolly, New York, New York

... Simple needs - food, shelter, warmth security, but no simple means to achieve them. Government agencies give and take away the funds which provide these basic needs necessary to the homeless. The agencies create their own style not really geared to the needs of the people. A home. Would not your type of particular requirements be unnecessary to another person? Perhaps those running support programs should ask the homeless how they wish to live, and then help them achieve it if possible. Can a person who lives in Gracie Mansion really dictate the needs of another human being who sits and sleeps in Grand Central Station? ...

Virginia-Lee Webb, New York, New York

... I'll be developing a proposal in conjunction with homeless residents of Justiceville, a shanty town/ concept of homeless people working together and organizing for the good of all homeless people ...

John Malpede, Los Angeles, California

AGAINST VISIONARY - FOR HISTORY

Some reactions and conflicts I have in participating in "Homeless at Home" have been raised before in other arenas when asked to provide architectural resolutions to social malaise. The question that gets raised is how do progressive architects, designers and planners do their work? To participate in building "worlds" for the homeless is to participate in the building and legitimizing the institution of homelessness. Homelessness is of crisis proportions across our country and I will be the first to argue and fight for all peoples' right to have homes. However, the structural reasons for homelessness must be examined simultaneously. Making objects and buildings which "symbolize a positive way of being human- create a home" becomes in short a glorification of victims, not only changing nothing but further re-affirming the social and political structures out of which homelessness arises. One might ask are we doing this out of guilt or are we honestly seeking, concretely, to change the conditions out of which homelessness emerges? What does it mean to provide homes without the means to support them?

It is powerless to only consider the short term, i.e. providing of homes, without acting from a position that understands both our history and the possibilities for making change. This raises the issue of what is the relationship of architects, artists, planners, and designers to politics and to history? For example, in the context of this exhibition, the cutting edge which divides the homeless and those with homes must be looked at. To understand the homeless apart from the jobless, from women and children abuse, and from the displaced is not to understand homelessness. To understand the homeless as an amorphous mass without recognizing the particularities of race, sex, and class is not to understand homelessness. That the fastest growing group comprising the homeless are single Black women and their children is real. Let's look at the social policy which when in crisis discards people. Ellen Baxter and Kim Hopper are correct when they speak of people's demoralization the likes of "which has not been seen for fifty years..." (1984). In the face of a building boom in Manhattan, for example, the homeless population soars. What response can progressive architects and planners have when faced with the contradiction of a boom, on the one hand, and diminishing affordable housing, on the other.

The questions raised by this exhibition have opened up the issues of what is the role of the progressive architect, planner and designer in this politically conflicted period of technological advances and social deprivation. How do we understand the progressiveness of architectural history? The current attacks on Modernism throw out the baby with the bath water. Technologies which make mass production possible offer us the only progressive means available to us today by which all people can have homes. This is historically true. Of more concern, however, is the attitude of late which speaks of the necessity of "new mythologies and positive mythic symbols, directed for humanness". Mythology "searches" follow in the long tradition of providing comforting images in the absence of concrete goods and services, i.e. homes. Architecture, in particular, has a long history of seeking universal images and personal visions; of being visionary. This side by side with the reality of what is happening in gentrifying communities and lost entitlements, visionary leaves out history, the real history of what people's day to day lives are like in these communities and, as well, has a history of never leaving the drawing board. What do architects, planners, designers, and artists do if they don't do "visionary" and want to take a progressive stand on the homeless? We must begin by examining our practice, by doing it differently. How to and what that looks like are questions we need to be asking and working very hard at answering.

For this exhibition, I will be selecting a site in New York City and documenting its social history. Within a context of developing relationships with social service agencies, educators, community builders and organizers, and homeless, I will make a proposal addressing homelessness as manifested by the larger social crisis we find ourselves in today.

Douglas Balder, Brooklyn, New York

...

This Is The City's Subway Entrance Doorway Human Beings Abandoned Building.
Two Bits Heating Vent Coffee Shop Bench Odd Lot Aggression Shadow Bed
Sidewalk Cruisin. Ulcerated Feet. "The Jungle" Tall Buildings Destroy/Build
Real Estate Grid Answers Fear. Shopping Cart Park, Asphalt Spam Storefront ...

Home Sweet Home Train Trailer Bus Terminal Railway Station On the Road
Again Sea Breeze Fresh Air Stacks of 2x4's. Charboard Carpet Gypsies
Roam/Rome, Stench. Ridin the Rails Public Restrooms Decline ...

Rea Jackson and Kim Unger, New York, New York

... THE HOMELESS SHOULD PERHAPS BE SEEN NOT AS OUTCASTS
BUT AS MIRRORS OF THE TRUE MODERN CONDITION. WE
THE MODERN "POUS" ALL LACK THE HOME, THE CENTER,
THE SET OF FIXED VALUES. THE TRADITIONAL CONCEPT
OF HOME IS ONLY A MYTH — THE COLLECTIVE IMAGES
AND MEMORIES OF SOME CLOSED CIRCLE OR PROTECTED
WORLD THAT NO LONGER EXISTS. IF IT EVER DID ...

Peter Thaler and Judy Mattingly, New York, New York

... It is an essential need for
people to participate in purposeful activity, whereas prolonged
social isolation fosters and promotes insecurity ...

... Evidently the
reason we avoid involvement in assisting others is due to our
inability to face our own feelings of loneliness and isolation.
The homeless make us look at ourselves and we don't like it ...

We feel that the general idea of the show is a good one, particularly to the extent that the question of homeful(less)ness can be applied to the most basic architectural issues--issues beyond Architecture or Revolution--issues dealing with the appropriateness of the very idea of Architecture in a time when every ideal and institution is subject to a profound skepticism.

The homeless are an a-, or perhaps post-, architectural people. By their existence and actions they demonstrate the artificiality of the loftier ideas of architecturality, yet at the same time, they present a unique opportunity for recasting the idea and discourse of Architecture as relevant and affective ...

Peter Pfau and Wes Jones, New York, New York

"NOW MY AIM IS CLEAR," WROTE GASTON BACHELARD, "I MUST SHOW THAT THE HOUSE IS ONE OF THE GREATEST POWERS OF INTEGRATION FOR THE THOUGHTS, MEMORIES AND DREAMS OF MANKIND." TO BACHELARD THE HOUSE IS CONCENTRATED, VERTICAL AND CHARACTERIZED BY THE POLARITY OF THE ATTIC AND THE CELLAR. A HOUSE IS THE SETTING FOR THE MAKING OF A HOME; IT IS HABITATION AT ITS ESSENCE. WHAT IS HABITATION WITHOUT A HOUSE? IT IS EITHER DREAM (ATTIC) OR "BURIED MADNESS, WALLED-IN TRAGEDY" (CELLAR). TO THE HOMELESS (HOUSELESS) IN THE CITY'S STREETS, HABITATION IS CHARACTERIZED BY THIS POLARITY, YET THERE IS NO CONCENTRATED PLACE FROM WHICH THESE EXTREMES MAY BE CONTEMPLATED. THEY ARE PRISONERS EXPOSED OR ENTOMBED BUT NEVER FREE TO INHABIT THE SPACES BETWEEN THESE POLARITIES.

MY PROJECT WILL INVESTIGATE AND DEMONSTRATE THIS POLARITY BY CONSTRUCTING AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH IS FREE OF ANY SPACE BETWEEN THESE POINTS; IT WILL BE AN ATTIC / CELLAR. MY DESIRE IS TO DESCRIBE SPATIALLY THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITION OF HOMELESSNESS.

Paul Rosenblatt, New York, New York

... Theodore Dreiser's Sister Carrie, published reluctantly and in a cut version in 1900, presented a chilling account of the persistence of homelessness in the nation's expanding industrial centers. Dreiser's cities, Philadelphia, Chicago, New York, London, were more than just urban settings for modern fictions. Cities appeared in ^{his} fiction as powerful entities capable of controlling the emotional and physical well-being of individuals. Yet individuals were integral parts of these new cities. The immensity of the physical surroundings could captivate and empower individuals as easily as entrap and destroy. Dreiser's cities surged at an inexorable pace while his characters moved to ^{discordant} atavistic, internal, "chemic" rhythms...

...Dreiser was writing about the expanding industrial cities of his youth, where peripheries proliferated, generating and at the same time obscuring the plight of the displaced. But whether we look at the expanding cities of a past industrial age, or at today's contracting cities, a record of institutional inadequacy prevails. Perhaps this can be attributed to recent discords of liberal ideology, that in the liberal application of social justice, individual moral integrity is imperiled. Or perhaps it can be traced to the profound detachment which characterized modern, urban sensibility. Surely, nearly a century later, and well into a post-industrial era, we can bridge the gap and seek solutions for a post-angstian generation...

Margaret McMillen, Los Angeles, California

...

The concerns of the homeless are no different, although accelerated, than the basic concerns of most people. They are a cross section of human impulse and conclusion that have as much homogeneity as a subway train full of passengers. The reasons they are homeless are also as varied as are the passenger's destinations.

The commonality is their fact of homelessness. even the term homeless is misleading. A human being does not remain homeless, he redefines his expectations of what home implies. There are those who feel at home anywhere. They have become completely portable, or isolated, and have defined their sense of home in non-physical terms ...

Many of the institutions serving the homeless address themselves to the specific problems of food and shelter. Even within those terms, luxury, comfort, and often dignity are not coincidental to the services offered...

Home provides a sense of identity. It is where the fragments and mementoes of one's personal history are stored and enjoyed. It is the place where one reaffirms his sense of being a total person after, usually, a day of functioning within the terms of a socially valuable and narrowed definition. Home becomes a set of emotional attachments to surroundings. It is the place where one can feel private and intimate.

Being homeless is being stripped of identity. It is being continuously vulnerable to the hostility and negativity most cities amply supply. A homeless person is one who must adapt continuously to a changing ~~immediate~~ environment over which he has absolutely no control in even the most immediate terms. He is a person who must be humble in every social encounter, and one who has no privacy.

Homeless people carry no keys. They have no doors to lock. They are seen and defined as individuals that are part of a social problem rather than as members of families...

Bob Dombrowski, New York, New York

...

The sculpture proposal entitled "HOUSE OF THRONES (EVERY MAN IS A KING, EVERY WOMAN A QUEEN)" which I am developing for the HOMELESS AT HOME exhibition addresses two issues: 1) that human dignity and self-respect are essential in the pursuit of an acceptable quality of life. The homeless not only need shelter, but shelter which does not further add to the level of their dehumanizing living conditions but rather which will help and encourage a regaining of dignity and self-respect. 2) that the possibility could exist for public sculpture to acknowledge and address the needs of the homeless.

First, it is my intention to propose a sculpture of a physical structure of homes which will encourage the psychological means towards regaining lost dignity. The proposal will be a drawing of a visionary architectural structure using elements and images associated with and symbolic of human dignity, concentrating on the ideals of what a home is--a safe, secure, warm, comfortable space in which to be.

Second, I am developing the proposal as a possible public sculpture in acknowledgement of the possibility for sculpture to be functional beyond being merely "aesthetically pleasing" to the public...

Wenda Habenicht, Brooklyn, New York

After having thought of several ways that the homeless could have a home in our society I was struck by the realization that none of the ideas would have a hope surviving in this country as it is today. The exhibition has requested visionary proposals, but the show is doomed to failure if this vision does not look straight into the face of the fear, scorn, and intolerance that much of society has for those without a home. How does one feel confident about a design for a home for the homeless when communities in this country form "troll buster" groups to persuade the transients to leave the area. The solutions must be more than great ideas that would work well in a great world. It must work for this world. This should not just mean lowered expectations but it should acknowledge the hatred and ignorance in the world and use it as a guide. Not only must the proposals work for those who are sympathetic to the problem, but it should, ideally have an impact on someone like George Will, who said about the homeless,

...there is a simple matter of public order and hygiene in getting these people somewhere else. Not arrest them, but move them off to someplace where they are simply out of sight and no longer a visible, in some case intrusive, in some case even an aggressive public nuisance.

...

If this competition is to have any substance it must address the means by which human beings, alone and in families, can be offered truly adequate hygiene and security along with "shelter from the elements."...

... (a) definition of an adequate standard of security for housing in New York City and other urban places today is not impossible. A solid entry door with a sturdy police lock (or equivalent) and windows that can be securely latched from inside are basically all that is required...

Provision of adequate hygiene, of course, is complicated by the perception in middle-class minds that facilities may be supplied at great cost only to have the tenants in publicly-assisted housing choose not to use them...

Yet I have seen with my own eyes that when a person who has been living slovenly in substandard quarters is given a clean, well-equipped apartment, behavior changes dramatically. Until we have created ten thousand new or rehabilitated apartments for those presently living in welfare hotels or shelters and then evaluated how that housing is used over a period of time, who can honestly say that "those people will never appreciate a decent home."?

There are three components for adequate hygiene in the homes for the homeless that we would propose in this competition. First, of course, are bathrooms (yes, maybe even a poor family of five or six people needs more than one) that are totally washable with fixtures kept in good operating condition. I long ago learned that proper maintenance of housing is far more important than inspired design. Second, kitchens that have simple but sturdy plumbing and enough storage space so work surfaces can be kept uncluttered and thus easily washed down. Third, adequate floor area in the dwelling unit itself for the number of occupants assigned and a sufficient amount of storage space so that rooms can be made to look tidy without enormous effort.

None of this is very mysterious, is it?...

Jim Morgan, New York, New York

"After midnight, the homeless become the majority in the waiting rooms of stations and terminals."

New York's other population...

..."people...long since lost to the mental health system, people without records...or addresses..."

A population without the usual, identifying marks of 20th century American society...no address (place of residence), no records (history), no self?

The homeless citizens of New York City need a sense of place; a shared public place in which they are comfortable; and an inside (both internal as perceived and actual/physical) for their constant, unremitting outside,

1. Homes for the homeless: connotes first a need for a hostel, physical shelter from a hostile/chaotic environment. This hostel, whatever its specific form, should exist within a "vivid & integrated physical setting, capable of producing a sharp image". The latter phrases are Kevin Lynch's in The Image of the City where he contends convincingly that "a clear image of the surroundings" is the "basis for individual growth", and that "an ordered environment" serves "as a broad frame of reference, an organizer of activity or belief or knowledge." Shelter signifies, then, not only an architectural solution, a peaked roof that sheds rain, but also psychological well-being, the interior significance of a room of one's own. This room will be lit by a window, affording a view of the passing scene, to be experienced actively at will. The room is a place of refreshment and renewal, of refuge from the outside at the same time it is a dressing room for the surrounding, exterior theatre that is the city.
2. Homelessness: can be defined semi-positively as having no ties, as self-sufficiency of a sort, associated with emotional detachment, a dispassionate attitude and independence from societal constraints/arbitrary dicta. Homelessness can be defined semi-negatively as rootlessness, as being alone and lonely with no dis-

cernable identity professionally (no work) or personally (no family); as cosmic helplessness (homeless person as victim of society's constraints).

3. Point of reference: recalls the phrases "home is where the heart is", David Byrne's "Home is where I want to be/pick me up and turn me 'round"* or even Paul Simon's "every stranger's face I see reminds me that I long to be homeward bound, I wish I was, homeward bound",..., Home as a point of reference *("I guess this must be the place") is necessary for establishing perspective, and for maintaining self-worth, both prerequisites for productive lives.
4. To accept assistance however it's proffered: one admits vulnerability, or personal fragility, often interpreted by oneself or others as censurable weakness. It is difficult if not impossible for some to accept help without relinquishing tightly held ideas of dignity and ego.
5. Can you treat the symptoms and simultaneously fight the cause? By this design process, we intend to integrate these 30,000+ men and 30,000+ women into 'fast-paced', 'competitive', and money-conscious New York City.
6. Home base means providing the necessary societal matrix for meaningful lives.
7. Entitlement to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (our birthright in the U.S.A.) means giving shelter to men and women in need by reason of "physical, mental, and social dysfunction."
8. Home serves as a private mental exercise, allowing for extension of one's own world into the outside world. Home prepares one for the exterior/outside home experience, but homelessness precludes any dialogue or interchange between inside and outside. The homeless person is always outside, exposed both physically and metaphorically.
9. Value of a communal experience: is the basis for democratic government where

self-determination of one's fate and a voice in the fate of one's fellows coexist. A community's government requires a forum of physical space and architectural expression as well as a forum of philosophical ideals.

10. A building can serve as a physical facility for the homeless population while at the same time serve as public art/architectural expression of, for example, entry into the city -- at the water's edge, a gateway to NEW YORK CITY with housing for the homeless as the structural pylons...
11. Finally, we must create a family, neighborhood, community matrix 'artificially' by our solution and graft it successfully to existing conditions.

Ellen Coxé and Bryan Price, New York, New York

Kim Higgins has worked with homeless people on various projects including art projects. Carla Davis interviewed homeless individuals who had made a "home" adjacent to her own. Also included are sample interview questions which may be used to conduct an interview and/or as a way to begin to think about interacting with a homeless individual.

IV



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INTERVIEWS OF HOMELESS PEOPLE

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY



UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CHICAGO, ILL. 60637
312 707-7200

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Homeless Person

Objectives:

To uncover the interviewee's particular way of being human.

-Before Homelessness

-During Homelessness

To discover the ways the interviewee succeeds and fails at making a home.

-Physically

-Socially

-Psychologically

To obtain the interviewee's opinion of city and private shelters.

Questions:

1. Ways of Being Human

a. How do you fill your time each day?

b. What was the smartest thing you ever did in your life?

c. Talk about your parents and growing up.

d. What would you do and buy if you won the NY lottery for a million dollars?

e. What kind of jobs have you held? And how do/did you get money?

f. Why don't you have a place now and where was the last place you lived?

Why did you leave?

g. Do you have a family, a spouse, a lover, a pet?

h. Who is your best friend?

2. Success and Failure at Making a Home

a. Where do you sleep or how long have you been sleeping here?

b. Where do you get food, clothing and money?

c. Where are your possessions and what are your possessions?

d. What is the worst and best thing about not having an apartment or house?

e. Do regular people, city officials or the police ever bother you?

f. If you have a family or extended family, why don't you live with them?

g. Where do you meet your friends? What do you do with your friends and what do you talk about?

h. Do you like the life you are leading?

3. Shelters or Hotels

a. Describe a day and night in the shelter.

b. What do you think of the officials here?

c. What is the food like?

d. Have you been turned away from shelters?

e. How long have you been in this shelter and by what means do you intend to leave?

f. Someone told me they had been trapped on Wards Island shelter. Have you heard of anything like that?

g. Have you ever been robbed or hit in the shelters?

INTERVIEW NO. 1
Homeless Person
By
Kim Higgins

While walking hurridly up Second Avenue, toward the photo store, another black man approached me asking for change. Rarely do I refuse these days, but this time I did. I was hot, thirsty, a little hungry, and in a hurry. I was completely indulged in myself and thoughts of how my life was going lately. Although, I refused, he kept following me and then pushed a sign in front of my face. I stoppped to read it. Despite being written in bleeding red ink on old cardboard, it was amazingly articulate, intelligent, and coherent. It asked not for money, but simple compassion for his situation. At that moment I stepped out of myself. Only then did I realize just where I'd been. Keenly observant, he recognized that "my face had changed". From then on he's been my friend. His history is sad, but somehow his spirit is still filled with some sense of optimism. Exactly why or how, I do not know.

Before this time, he lived as a musician and a writer. He left home to travel with a band, which caused much friction with his family. He was an only child in a black middle class family that could not understand his need to be an artist. Months later, the band fell apart. He was forced to swallow his pride and return home. Upon their request, he "tried college", but soon felt he had out grown it. Somehow, he hooked up with old musician friends again, and was lured to the city for days at a time. He soon fell into a pattern of spending less and less time at home, and more and more time in the city. Looking for somewhere to feel "comfortable", he continued to "hang with the crowd". The crowd was also into drugs, however, and one time too many, he followed the leader. That night the leader was lucky and got away. Unfortunately, he did not. He was busted and sent to prison for two years.

He was released in January and since then has been living off the street. He panhandles on his good days, and stays "lost" on his bad ones. During these bad times, he seems to lose everything -- from his sense of time and place to his meager possessions. He loves to carry around a small black book filled with people's names and numbers who have been kind enough to help him in some way. But he keeps losing it and has lost three of them in the short time I have known him. Somehow, he always finds another one and starts over. It took me a while to understand how much and why this book acts as his life line.

Interestingly, his whole life seems to be filled with lines. Waiting in line to get a bed at the welfare hotel; waiting in line to get some kind of soup or something for breakfast; waiting in line to talk to someone in the welfare office; waiting in line at the unemployment office; waiting in line to take a shower; waiting in line to apply to job: etc., etc. It's no wonder he despises lines, and, therefore, loses his small black book.

But just the other day, he actually got a job. What kind is not important -- because he makes \$23 a day. The very next day, however, he was hit by a car while riding a bicycle. He was hospitalized for five days. After finding out his medicaid card had expired (during his

prison stay), they released him without the plastic surgery needed on his mouth. Yes, they gave him written prescriptions to ward off infection, but what good did that do when he has no money to fill them.

He is lucky, however, because he talked with his employer who is willing to give him a new start on Monday. But he probably won't show up. Now, he is worse than ever. He could never get all of the medicine and his face is infected and swollen. He hurts bad and is wandering around wondering what to do next. His mother will no longer accept his collect phone calls.

INTERVIEW NO. 2

Homeless Person

By

Kim Higgins

She was an older lady, perhaps in her 60's. I first encountered her as I was talking with a homeless jug attendant at Columbus Circle. Complete with layers of coats and bags, she walked up and deposited some change into the jug. This struck me oddly because I had assumed she was homeless, and, therefore, should be using the money herself. After she left, the attendant explained to me that she was very secretive about her homelessness. Of course, it probably reassured her as well as her fantasy to give money.

I saw her at the same place about two months later. Her coats and bags were different, but still intact. This time, I attempted to strike up a conversation with her about giving money to the homeless. Her vehement reply took me completely by surprise. She insisted that there were only three things that homeless people really needed. They were food, shelter and socks.

INTERVIEW NO. 3

Homeless Person

By

Kim Higgins

A shy, small woman with curly hair whispered to me faintly, "Can you spare some change?". Recognizing that she was new to the neighborhood, I felt sympathy. I didn't think I had any change, but I scrounged in my bag anyway. Luckily, I found a quarter, so I handed it to her. Shyly and in a high-pitched voice, she said, "Thank you very much".

About a week later, I passed her a second time. Again, she timidly asked for change. This time I asked her if she had a home.

"No".

"Where do you sleep?"

"My mother kicked me out"

As she spoke, she turned completely away from me, making it impossible to hear the rest of her sentence. She turned around again and said,

"Do you have 80¢?"

"Why?"

"For some cigarettes."

"Have you eaten anything?"

"No".

"Shouldn't you eat something first?"

She turned away mumbling again so that I could not hear her. Continuing to mumble, she turned a complete circle. The only clear words I could understand were "I must be 10 years older than you..." She then stopped turning, but stood with her back toward me as if to affirm she was truly ashamed of who she was.

I suddenly felt terrible for questioning her like that when I knew NOTHING really of who she was or what she was about. Perhaps for that moment, it was much more important she find a way to get a cigarette. Who was I to know what was best for her?

Quickly, I handed her all the change in my pocket. I walked away feeling sick, and that I had probably made matters worse instead of better.

INTERVIEW NO. 4
Homeless Person(s)
By
Carla Davis

Introduction: There is a garbage-strewn lot beside my apartment building on East First Street, New York, New York. A rudimentary shelter appeared out there several days prior to this interview. The structure consists of a discarded kitchen sink cabinet turned on end which supports some old boxsprings and sheets of plywood which form the walls and roof around a twin mattress on the ground. While photographing this makeshift home from my kitchen window, I was started by the sound of an alarm clock. A man soon emerged and sat outside, yawned and lit a cigarette. Soon another man arrived carrying bags of empty bottles and cans. I went outside to meet them.

C.D.: Hello, can I talk with you? Are you busy?

Two Men: (Laughter) No! Sit down, fine...

C.D.: I'm working with some people who want to know how you're doing. Do you mind if I ask some question?

Victor: No, that's fine - but we're going to eat soon...

C.D.: I'll use a tape recorder so it won't take long...

Two Men: (Laughter) Fine...O.K.

C.D.: What do you do during the day?

Victor: We hit the bottle...we drink...

Jose: (Laughter)

C.D.: What do you do to get money?

Victor: I sell...sometimes I go look in the trash and find stuff and sell it...

Jose: You know the flea market on Cooper Square?...

C.D.: (Nods)

Victor: I find a nice ring...silver...I found a lamp...I sell it...

Jose: You can find a lot of stuff...

C.D.: You use what other people don't want?

Victor: Yeah, they throw it...

C.D.: What sort of jobs did you have in the past?

Victor: Dishwasher, busboy, electrician.

Jose: I draw and paint, you know...with acrylics...charcoal...oil paint...

C.D.: Where was the last place you had an apartment?

Jose: In Brooklyn...

Victor: Right now I'm staying here...

Jose: Now I've got a different house...(laughter)

C.D.: What happened...?

Jose: I start drinking and when I do it cause no good...I know that...

C.D.: It caused trouble with your jobs...?

Jose: Yeah...

C.D.: Do you have family?

Jose: (Nods and laughs)

C.D.: Are you best friends?
Victor: No...I know him twice time - we drink together...we kill the time...
C.D.: did you meet in a shelter?
Victor: No, we meet in same thing...a place like this...empty spots in between buildings...
Jose: I was drunk...I came up with a couple of quarts of beer and I saw him and knew he was O.K. 'cause he looked like me...
C.D.: How long have you been here?
Jose: Around four hours...(laughs)
Victor: I been here about one week...
C.D.: Did you build this...?
Victor: (Nods) But I want to find a place to stay...
C.D.: Do people bother you here?
Victor: No...nobody...
Jose: You know why? 'Cause we don't bother nobody...what goes up comes back...same thing...
C.D.: How do you feel about the shelters?
Jose: I don't like them...
Victor: We're going there to eat...
C.D.: How's the food?
Victor: Very good...morning they have milk, cereal, coffee, orange juice, bread and butter...and once a week they have eggs...lunch is four times a week...sometimes they have bologna and lives...its very good.
C.D.: What do you do to protect your possessions?
Victor: I don't have any possessions...
Jose: All I have are my ideas...some change...
C.D.: What would you do if you won the lottery or suddenly had money?
Jose: First of all, I would go to detox(ifiction)...after that I would share half for me, half for the other people...
Victor: That's a great idea...
C.D.: What kind of job would you like to have?
Jose: Same thing...painting...you know I used to have a job making piano...I like to draw, paint...poetry...dancing...an artist...four years ago I was making \$6.20 an hour...\$250 a week...but then...
Victor: See...they give us a meal ticket...a card like that (holds out ticket).
Jose: Hey, you look at us...like...(laughs)...two alley cats...
C.D.: No! (laughs)
Victor: They write the day available...
C.D.: do you have to show identification to eat?
Victor: No, just this...
C.D.: Have you ever been turned away when you needed to eat?
Victor: No.
Victor: (Gestures to Jose.) He has been thinking of going on housing program because he's tired of sitting outside...he just told me...housing...apartment...

Jose: When he drinks...when I drink...we are both alike...our personalities don't change too much...we laugh, make jokes...we sing...he watches my back and I watch his...like brothers...

C.D.: Is there anything good about not having an apartment?

Jose: It's better...we're free...like birds...we go wherever we want...do what we want to do...

Victor: It's better apartment...better to have apartment...I looking...but I don't know where...

Jose: Do you know what claustrophobia is?...what is it?

C.D.: It's when you're afraid of being in a small, confined area...

Jose: Yeah...that's me...

C.D.: What's the worst thing...are you afraid sometimes?

Jose: I get paranoid when I get too close...I don't know why...maybe because I been too close when I was a child...I was overprotected ...my family gave me everything...I was born here 48th Street on West Side...did you see West Side Story?...that was nice music...

C.D.: Have you been to Wards Island?

Victor: Yeah, I was in there...they give me three meals a day y'know...they have about 200 beds in there...

Jose: It's dangerous there...

Victor: They stole my shoes...they took my brand new shoes...I put them under my bed and try to get some nap...in the morning, I couldn't find my shoes...

Jose: Salud de paisano por amor de amador...(Clicks his tongue and shakes his head.) Translation: (Hello, friend - from the one you love who adores you.)

Victor: So I walk a little bit and I find different shoes and put them on my feet...I'm born in Romania but I'm here ten years...

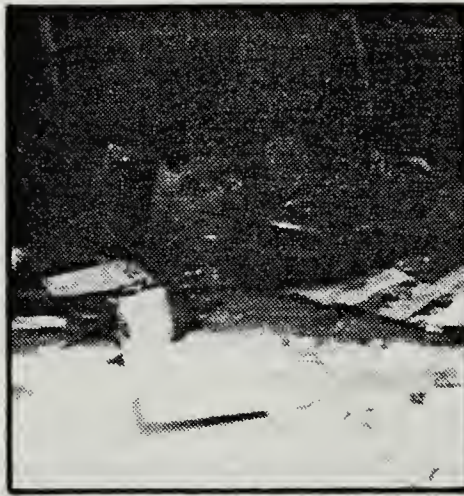
Jose: And Carla is from...? (Holds out an imaginary microphone.)

C.D.: (Laughs) Virginia...O.K. I don't want to keep you from going to eat lunch...goodbye now...

Two Men: (Laughter) O.K. Goodbye.

NOTE: The shelter has since been abandoned and has fallen apart.

VICTOR AND JOSE'S "HOME"



(c) Carla Davis, 1985
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This selection reflects the willingness of various personnel to cooperate with us. It does not present a complete sample of the various types of shelters or their conditions. A typical questionnaire is also included.

V



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INTERVIEWS OF ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL AT SHELTERS



SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Administrative Personnel-Shelters for the Homeless

Objectives:

To obtain the statistics.

To learn how the facilities can be improved:

-Physical Conditions -Programs -Staff

To learn of ways in which homeless people in the following three categories can be reintegrated into society:

-Economically Deprived -Disabled, Mentally/Physically -Choice

Questions:

1. What programs do you offer?

Type:	No. Served-Day/Month	Describe
Night Sleep		
Shower		
De-licing		
Food		
Clothing		
Employment		
Daycare		
Day Hang-Out		
Mail Boxes		
Medical		
Recreation		
Education		
Religion		
Counseling		
Apartment Search		
Other		

2. Describe the staff-volunteers and paid.

3. What kind of building is it?

4. Who pays for programs?

5. Who does the facility primarily serve?

6. Why would anyone be asked to leave the place or be refused entry?

7. What percentage of your users get back on their feet?

Facility Improvements

1. What physical changes or additions would you make to the shelter if \$100 or \$1000 or \$5000 or a blank check was available?

2. What programs are necessary to add and why?

3. What staff improvements should be made?

Future for the Homeless

1. What kind of physical settings and programs should be available for the three groups?

2. Is the number of homeless temporary?

INTERVIEW NO. 1
Administrative Personnel-Shelters
By
Barbara Yoshida

WOMEN'S SHELTER

Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association, Inc.
331 East 70th St. , New York, New York 10020
(212) 744-5022, Extension 227

Shelter for women only, 20 beds maximum, 11 filled now (which is low), usually 15-17 women each night. Night sleep only, from 10:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. Shelter in existence about two and a half years. Located in a building which also contains a youth program, exercise programs, a program for young children (Headstart?), and various other programs for residents of the neighborhood. Area covered by the shelter is from 59th St. to 96th St., and from Central Park to the East River. The building in which the shelter is located dates from around 1920, and is one of the original settlement houses. Average age of residents is between 40 and 60; there are a couple of women in their early 30's, some in their 60's and some in their 70's. No limit to the length of stay. Residents can receive mail at the shelter; it is given to the aides, who in turn give it to the residents. There is a nurse on call for medical emergencies. The Manhattan Bowery Corporation has a psychology team and nurse for use when evaluations are needed (mostly for dealing with alcoholics, schizophrenics, etc.; has a detoxification facility). The City provides linen service. The women change their own linen.

The shelter operates in coordination with the Neighborhood Coalition for Shelters, which runs a day program at 115 East 74th St. Most of the women who come to the shelter have been referred by N.C.S., or by other residents. A snack (e.g., cheese, fruit, crackers), and tea or decaffeinated coffee are provided by the aides when the residents arrive. The shelter also gives breakfast and Sunday night dinner. Saturday night dinner is catered by a temple in the neighborhood, and other nights of the week, dinner is provided by one of several neighborhood churches.

N.C.S. places some women in jobs, helps them write resumes, places ads in the newspaper, and helps them find places to live when they are ready. N.C.S. purchased an S.R.O. on 81st St. Three or four women went there from the shelter. Most of the women still need supervision, and can only afford an S.R.O. In the S.R.O. which N.C.S. bought, there is supervision, even tenant meetings. N.C.S. also helps the women get public assistance, meals, etc. and provides some counseling re: therapy and retraining.

If a woman is violent toward herself, she is sent to a hospital. If anyone is violent or potentially violent toward others, Manhattan Bowery Corporation will be called. A resident with a drug or alcohol problem will be accepted with the understanding that she agrees to undergo treatment.

The staff consists of a president, and executive director, and assistant executive director, a shelter director, and outreach team (newly formed), aides, and volunteers. Each night there are two

shifts, from 9:00 P.M. to 1:00 A.M., and from 12:30 A.M. to 7:30 A.M. During each shift, one aide and two volunteers are in attendance. Some of the aides have sociology backgrounds and "site degrees."

The women have access to the showers for an hour or two, then they are locked. Usually they do not need de-licing, however this can be done if necessary. They have access to a washer and dryer from 10:00 P.M. to 11:30 P.M., and also an ironing board. In this small laundry room, there is a closet with clothes donated from the neighborhood, which is locked, and opened from time to time so that clothing can be distributed when needed. There are a few shelves in this room where residents can keep boxes and paper bags with personal belongings.

The newly formed outreach team will help women on the streets find dinner, a bed for the night, public assistance, etc. At the moment they need a case aide. There is some City funding for the outreach team. Basically, the shelter is funded by private contributions. There is a very active and successful drive for fund raising on the part of the shelter administration. The community seems to be extremely supportive. During the month of May, 1985, neighborhood volunteers did a count of the homeless in the area. (The results are not known yet.)

When asked about homelessness, Ms. Sherwood said "It's growing. I'd like to say it's temporary, but unless major changes are made at the top, on the level of the Federal Administration.....There are programs, but not thorough programs. Many of them are just places where people sit and vegetate. We need serious counseling, retraining. Some women lose their leases, a husband dies, perhaps; this can lead to a 'bag lady' syndrome... they lose touch with reality...they become 'permanently' homeless."

The problem with major architectural renovation in this shelter is that the beds are placed each night in a gymnasium which is used during the daytime for other purposes. However, privacy screens would be welcome, and individual lockers. Space is quite limited, although with the help of a good architect, the space that is available could be more efficiently designed. At the present time, the kitchen is located one floor above the gymnasium, and the laundry room is in the basement. Perhaps a kitchenette could be put in the room where the aides stay at night, which is adjacent to the gymnasium. Additional funding would enable the aides' assistants to be paid instead of asking them to volunteer their time, and would also pay for a nurse on staff. Ms. Sherwood would like to see more serious counseling, more creative work, more vocational training offered. Maybe the shelter could open at 8:00 P.M. (if the gymnasium is not going to be used), and there could be group activities, movies, etc.

As of the date of this interview, possible plans for work to be done include refinishing the wood floors, and adding dimmer switches to the lighting system.

INTERVIEW NO. 2
Administrative Personnel-Shelters
By
Anne Lewison

St. Francis Residence 2
Single Room Occupancy Hotel
155 West 22nd Street
New York, New York 10011

A Permanent Residence for the Chronically Mentally Ill.

At the door, I was greeted by a bright box of pink and white petunias and the beaming smile of Father John Felice, administrator of this residence and St. Francis Res. 1. Neither of these residences are shelters, they are permanent residences and the difference is vast. Each tenant is known by name and character. Each tenant has his or her own room and the responsibility to keep it clean. Each has the opportunity to contribute to the preparing and serving of meals.

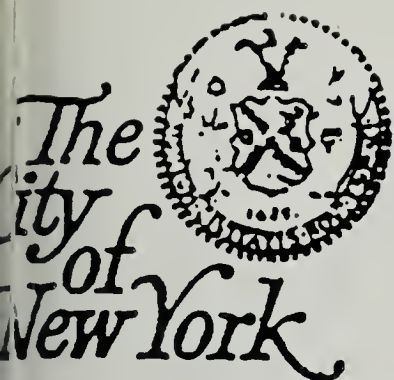
Father John stressed that this is a home for people who have come from the street most frequently and have been released from either Bellevue or another hospital and are diagnosed as chronically mentally ill. The residence has both full-time and part-time medical staff to accommodate their needs. However, their participation in the everyday programs of meals, breakfast and lunch, is encouraged and tenants are paid for their help.

Briefly, there are: 115 rooms, 4 apartments, 140 tenants (1/3 women, 2/3 men and two families with children. The tenants pay \$180.00 per month for their rooms which includes fresh linens daily, two meals and the services of medical staff and social workers as well as materials for art programs, etc. St. Francis has compiled a very complete document on their history and operating methods so I shall not repeat them here. I think it is more valuable to express the feeling I got from the place.

These people have come from the street, says Father John, and it is a slow delicate process to reintegrate them back into a home. He said that part of their illness can be attributed to the constant uncertainty of their homelessness although it is not the cause of the illness. "These people may be crazy but they're not stupid...they all have personalities and characters that emerge in time with a little care and interest." It is this personal attitude that seems to be the most healing and certainly leads to the success of both the St. Francis Residences.

Tenants can stay as long as they like and are chosen for their frailty. The residence has small public rooms, a factor of being two small adjoining buildings. The common spaces, like the entry hall are always populated and not locked. The administrative office is an open office, too small for the number of people working there, let alone the tenants who wander in occasionally, but there is a feel of freedom and family.

Due to the success of the first two residences, Father John is hoping to begin a third. But that is all because then there will be too many people for him to know every face and remember every name.



AA L. KELLERMANN, M.D.
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DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
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OPERATED BY
THE ST. FRANCIS RESIDENCE,
A NOT-FOR-PROFIT
SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY HOTEL

JUNE, 1983

THE ST. FRANCIS RESIDENCE

INTRODUCTION

The St. Francis Residence is a 99 room, single room occupancy hotel located at 125 East 24th Street in Manhattan. It was purchased and renovated in late summer of 1980 through a joint effort led by St. Francis Friends of the Poor, Inc., a not-for-profit organization, for the purpose of providing safe, permanent and dignified housing to individuals with severe psychiatric disabilities who have experienced years of personal and institutional neglect. The St. Francis Friends of the Poor, Inc. is a public not-for-profit corporation which was started by two priests from the St. Francis of Assisi Church. Its mission is sanctioned by the Church but it is a corporate entity without legal connections to the Church. It continues to raise funds to add to the resources available to St. Francis Residence and to develop other projects.

In addition to being a permanent residence, the St. Francis offers comprehensive psycho-social services to all its tenants. This comprehensive service has several components, one of which is an on-site rehabilitation Community Support Systems program.

The combined effort of each component contributes to the overall goals of diminishing the need for rehospitalization, providing for basic needs and making life as comfortable and pleasurable as possible for all the tenants.

The St. Francis Residence has a long and complex history. The planning and implementation of this comprehensive service program began in January, 1971, at the Aberdeen Service Center located at the Aberdeen Hotel. The philosophy, objectives and goals of the program evolved over an extended period of time through on-going discussions among staff members involved in the project.

It is the purpose of this report to describe how and why the St. Francis Residence developed into a high quality and effective program. This will be accomplished through providing historical and background information which illustrates the multi-step process leading to the operation of the St. Francis as it is today. It should be emphasized that the task of creating an effective combination of services for a troubled population most often requires an extended start-up period to work through all of the stumbling blocks in its way.

Following this historical perspective, there will be a description of the St. Francis Residence service program with particular attention focused on the Community Support Systems rehabilitation component which was initiated on March 1, 1982.

HISTORICAL BACKDROP

In the early 1970s, the Aberdeen Hotel (located at 17 West 32nd Street) was a run-down, for profit, SRO hotel which rented most of its rooms to deinstitutionalized mental patients. The 1970s was a time when thousands of individuals with pervasive psycho-social problems were being released into communities without adequate support services to meet their needs.

In response to the needs of this population, Father J. from the St. Francis of Assisi Church began the Aberdeen Service Center by convincing hotel management to donate on-site program space. Through persistent outreach efforts, he was able to bring together interested individuals from various agencies for the purpose of developing a psycho-social service center at the Aberdeen SRO to help meet the needs of its tenants.

The group of agencies in the early 1970s that combined their resources and volunteered staff for the Aberdeen Center included St. Francis of Assisi Church, Crisis Intervention Services of the Human Resources Administration, New York University Medical Center, Bellevue Hospital Center, New York State Department of Health, the Visiting Nurse Service of New York and the Hudson Guild Counseling Center of St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center of New York.

It is interesting to note that, given the high number of host agencies originally involved with the Aberdeen and currently involved at the St. Francis, an unusual amount of cooperation permeates the program. An important factor contributing to the cooperation seems to be the helping individuals themselves. They have chosen to work at the St. Francis out of a commitment to helping the population it serves. This is not to dismiss the problems and conflicts which would inevitably arise when different host agencies are brought together but, rather, to emphasize the factors leading to the cooperation which is essential for the operation of a successful program.

From the beginning, the staff has always been described as being dedicated and committed to fostering a dignified and humane living environment for its residents.

THE RESIDENTS

There were about 150 residents, over a period of time, who became involved with the Aberdeen Service Center. Because of the population and social climate fostering deinstitutionalization, most of the Aberdeen tenants had

been discharged from Bellevue Hospital Center and Manhattan Psychiatric Center in fragile condition. They ranged in age from young to old and represented many different ethnic backgrounds. Some maintained contact with their families of origin while many did not. They were poor, lonely, isolated and ill prepared to manage the day-to-day occurrences of their lives.

The shift from hospital to community-based living in a setting such as the Aberdeen required a long process of adjustment where basic entitlements such as public assistance, SSI and food stamps could be secured and socialization skills could be developed. One of the major areas of difficulty for this population was in establishing and maintaining good relationships with each other, staff and the community in which they lived.

In order to begin to meet these needs, the staff at the Aberdeen met regularly to thoroughly discuss program objectives, goals and philosophy. They also considered how to evaluate a potential referral for admission to the program.

Through input from psychiatric staff associated with the Aberdeen Service Center, a lot was learned about the individuals referred to the Aberdeen from psychiatric hospitals. This knowledge was essential for planning services most appropriate for the potential tenants.

Staff members decided that they would accept the most fragile and disabled individuals first. The only criteria for not accepting tenants was clear evidence of being a danger to themselves or others or a clear tendency toward arson.

It must be kept in mind that, because the Aberdeen was managed as a for-profit operation through different ownership, management had a vested interest in keeping the rooms filled with those tenants who paid their rent and were not disruptive to the operation of the hotel. Therefore, conflict sometimes arose over what to do with a tenant who became disruptive because he/she had too much to drink or was beginning to psychiatrically decompensate. Frequently, staff of the Service Center intervened to convince management to keep the tenant while staff worked intensively with him or her to reduce the amount of disruptive behavior. Other issues which arose with management involved the upkeep of the Aberdeen. If plumbing was broken or flooding occurred, the Service Center staff could advocate on behalf of the tenants and work with them to press management for immediate remediation. However, ultimate authority rested with management and owners.

Trust between and among tenants and staff developed slowly. Weekly socialization groups were held at the Service Center where staff would sit around and talk with tenants who showed up. The refreshments offered served several purposes. They were a way of reaching out by giving of nourishment as well as creating a relaxed atmosphere conducive to chatting and getting to know one another.

CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP

The ownership status of a SRO hotel has critically important implications for an on-site service center. Not-for-profit ownership, where management and program staff are both interested in the complete welfare of the tenants such as in the case of the St. Francis, is of obvious benefit. It provides for a living environment where the human needs of permanent housing, recreation, health and psycho-social services are met under one roof. The for-profit ownership model of a SRO hotel results in an orientation to making money which is most often incompatible with fulfilling tenants' needs. Additionally, the owners of the for-profit hotel control its destiny. They can sell the building to someone who can choose to ask tenants to leave so that the building can be converted into another type of status such as a co-operative apartment building. This does not offer tenants any security that their home is permanent. Removal of the critical element of stability can undermine the benefits of the service program.

A major consequence of the for-profit ownership status of the Aberdeen Hotel was that, in the fall of 1979, it was learned that the hotel would be sold for conversion to a tourist hotel.

Naturally, the Service Center staff members were upset and concerned to learn that the Aberdeen was to be sold. They feared for what would happen to the tenants, as they would inevitably be forced out by higher rents, and for the program that they had worked so hard to establish. They took immediate action by searching for and finding a hotel called the Beechwood, later renamed St. Francis.

Through a tremendous fund raising drive directed by St. Francis Friends of the Poor, Inc., enough money was raised to purchase the Beechwood in August, 1980 for \$550,000 and to renovate it for an additional \$250,000. The renovation was executed with the needs of the tenants and program in mind. It is because the St. Francis Residence is owned by a caring not-for-profit organization and operated for the purpose of providing comprehensive service, i.e., housing and psycho-social treatment, that this kind of renovation was possible.

The entire building needed to be plastered and painted. New furniture was bought for each room. The first floor was structurally redesigned to create an office for staff, a day room/lounge, dining room, kitchen and doctor's office.

THE MOVE FROM THE ABERDEEN TO THE ST. FRANCIS

Staff reassured the tenants of the Aberdeen that they would have a place to live at the St. Francis. Some tenants were eager to move because the Aberdeen management had raised the rent for their rooms in an effort to get them out to begin conversion. Nevertheless, the fragility of the the population required that staff closely monitor the entire process. Since the St. Francis is smaller than the Aberdeen, not all of the tenants could be moved. About 30 still remain at the Aberdeen. Although the bulk of the psycho-social program is at the St. Francis, there is a full time CIS-HRA worker at the Aberdeen as well as time put in by CSS staff and others. The 30 remaining tenants will either move to the St. Francis should rooms become available or to a newly purchased hotel, currently called the Stanford.

At the time the first tenants moved to the St. Francis, there were still about 35 remaining Beechwood tenants. There was some trepidation about the integration of Aberdeen and Beechwood tenants. In general, this was because the Beechwood tenants were older and not quite as disturbed as the incoming former Aberdeen tenants.

On November 20, 1980, eight of the most fragile Aberdeen tenants moved into the St. Francis Residence with the others following shortly thereafter. Due to the staff's sensitivity and its recognition of the transition and adjustment period faced by the tenants, the move went smoothly.

The philosophy of the commitment to understand and meet the needs of tenants at a given time undoubtedly helped to facilitate the entire process. This was further facilitated by the management and program being one and the same. If a tenant had an alcohol related binge which resulted in breaking a window, the St. Francis staff would try to work with the tenant therapeutically to deal with the incident. This is not to dismiss the increased awareness of the many facets of operating a residence, but merely to emphasize the increased therapeutic opportunities when program and management are united behind one purpose; that is, to provide the best possible care for residents.

The following sections will describe the St. Francis Residence. It will provide an overview of the physical plant and maintenance of the building, a discussion of St. Francis population and a comprehensive program description.

THE ST. FRANCIS:

DESCRIPTION OF THE PHYSICAL PLANT

The St. Francis Residence is a six story older building which is not notably different from those in the surrounding area. It has 99 rooms divided into 18 on each floor with four bathrooms on each floor. The architectural design of the building generates a feeling of warmth and comfort. Five of the 99 rooms accomodate two people.

In the lobby of the building, there is a 24-hour desk coverage area to the right as one enters. One side of the main floor is the program area. This area is composed of several rooms. The first room, facing 24th Street, is the main staff area. The project director from St. Francis Friends of the Poor, Inc., staff from CSS and CIS-HRA are present there all day. Administrative staff from St. Francis Friends of the Poor, Inc. are frequently present too. Tenants have access to this room and the staff most of the time. People walk in and out freely. Down the hall is the tenant lounge equipped with a TV and stereo. This is the tenants' living room where some activities take place, including the weekly tenants' council meeting.

Down the hall from this lounge is an activities room where art, weaving, and cooking groups are held. This room also doubles as a dining room for the breakfast and lunch program. This area is adjacent to the kitchen where breakfast and lunch are prepared by participants in the food program. A room at the rear of the first floor serves as a doctor's office.

MAINTENANCE OF THE PHYSICAL PLANT

The management/maintenance staff differs from the program staff. Management and maintenance staff includes four full time desk managers who work the desk, elevator and night shift, two full time janitors and one maintenance person Monday thru Friday and three desk staff for the weekend. The only time management becomes involved with program issues is at the weekly tenants' council meeting. This council meeting is a forum for tenants to express their complaints and grievances to the desk manager. Grievances may revolve around problems with roaches or broken furniture. Because the desk manager has been carefully chosen by the administration of St. Francis Friends of the Poor, Inc., he is sensitive to tenants' problems and needs. The desk manager responds quickly to tenant concerns. He will also elicit grievances from tenants because they may be reluctant

to speak out about problems to the very people on whom they rely for help.

The Residence was set up to be a cost-effective project. After the initial purchase and renovation costs, which are paid off in full, all ordinary maintenance costs are covered by the rent payments of the tenants. The rent structure was established based on tenants' ability to pay. Monthly rents range from \$140 to \$200 per room, depending on the size of the room, and the amount of rent that tenants can afford.

THE ST. FRANCIS TENANTS

The 104 St. Francis residents range in age from 26 to 75. All age groups are represented with the majority being between the ages of 30 to 50. There are 75 men and 29 women. The majority of tenants receive SSI, about 20 receive public assistance and the remainder receive other forms of social security and Veterans' benefits. Of the 104 St. Francis tenants, 57 are CSS eligible based upon history of prior hospitalization and chronic functional psychiatric disability. There are an additional 13 tenants living at the Aberdeen Hotel who are CSS eligible. Of the 70 CSS tenants living at either the St. Francis or the Aberdeen, there are 45 men and 25 women. They are from varied cultural and ethnic backgrounds. All CSS tenants and many of the remaining tenants have very serious emotional disabilities, many with long histories of hospitalization. Some past hospitalizations are difficult to document, in part because tenants do not remember when and where hospitalizations occurred. Tenants often become upset if pressed to discuss hospitalization episodes.

Approximately 20% of the tenants have some contact with families while the others have lost those connections. The tenants' level of attained education ranges from completion of the second grade to one doctoral candidate. Many non-CSS tenants have substance abuse problems. When these problems get out of hand, everything possible is done to help tenants. Staff may work with them on a referral to a substance abuse program.

About 40 tenants receive psychotropic medication on a daily basis from the CSS nurse clinician. A few tenants manage their own medication. About 20 tenants receive weekly injections of prolixin. The remainder either refuse to take prescribed medication or do not need it.

Since this population tends to have trouble managing their money, St. Francis staff offers some assistance by arranging for checks to be cashed at the St. Francis by the St. Francis program director. For those tenants who agree, St. Francis management will provide a daily allowance with a portion of their check that remains after rent is deducted.

SOURCE OF REFERRALS TO THE ST. FRANCIS

The only criterion for admission to the St. Francis is serious psychiatric disability. Given available rooms, St. Francis will only reject someone who is blatantly a danger to him/herself or others.

The St. Francis is a permanent residence. Therefore, rooms rarely become available. When one does, it is usually because a tenant has passed away. As mentioned earlier, empty rooms are quickly filled by tenants from the Aberdeen. Rooms are offered occasionally to psychiatrically disabled persons who have been living on the street and become known to someone connected to the St. Francis. Those individuals often require a longer period of adjustment to congregate living as indicated by the fact that they often stay a few days, move back to the street and then return to the Residence. Gradually, an adjustment to the Residence is made as the individual feels welcome by staff and tenants.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ST. FRANCIS PROGRAM

The St. Francis Residence program includes the following staff:

St. Francis Friends of the Poor, Inc.

President
Vice President
Secretary
Project Director

NYC DMH, MR&AS CSS On-Site Rehabilitation Team

Coordinator / Nurse Clinician
2 Activities Therapists
5 hr/week Psychiatrist

Human Resources Administration - Crisis Intervention Services

1 Project Coordinator
1 Project Coordinator (Aberdeen; half time)
1 Assistant Project Coordinator (Aberdeen)

In addition to the full time staff members, there are significant individuals who contribute their time and participate in weekly staff meetings. They complete and enrich the overall program. These individuals from other agencies are:

Bellevue Hospital Center

Director of Bellevue Psychiatric Emergency Room
2 select 4th year Residents
Director of Activities Therapy

Manhattan Psychiatric Center - East 17th Street Outpatient Clinic
1 Social Worker

The MPC social worker attends weekly staff meetings and contributes information about tenants attending the clinic. There are about 10 tenants who attend this after-care clinic on a weekly or monthly basis.

The long history of a written liaison agreement with Bellevue Hospital Center Department of Psychiatry has helped to facilitate the admission of tenants to the Hospital when necessary. The Director of Activities Therapy has been involved with the St. Francis for many years. He had originally supervised two activities therapists at the Aberdeen Service Center. He chose to remain involved with the St. Francis through attending weekly staff meetings and acting as the liaison for the St. Francis tenants to a day program at Bellevue.

The main office in the front part of the St. Francis is a communal staff area. It opens at 9:30 a.m. Monday through Friday. Tenants are continuously entering this office for a variety of reasons. The informal, low-keyed nature of this communal area where tenants have free access to staff is very important clinically. Tenants do not need to arrange appointments to see staff there. Feelings of warmth and availability are generated there as tenants go in and out for varying amounts of time.

The main office is where tenants get medication from the CSS Nurse Clinician and where they may also inquire about medical concerns. The Nurse Clinician can also monitor changes in tenants' physical and mental health because she interacts with them on a daily basis. Tenants are able to cash their checks and receive their daily allotment of money in this office. It is where all problems related to the bureaucratic system of entitlements are sorted out by the CIS project coordinator. These problems include being denied SSI, not receiving a monthly public assistance check, problems with food stamp allotments and much more. Tenants spend time lounging and talking with staff. It is a place where they feel comfortable, safe and secure. Some stay a few minutes and leave, others remain longer and still others return intermittently throughout the day. In addition to the interactions between different staff members and tenants,

there is significant interaction among staff members. This interaction involves not only the communication necessary for the on-going functioning of the program but interpersonal communication as well. The tenants observe this staff interaction which also serves as a role model of socialization. This is a therapeutic benefit for a population which is in dire need of learning precisely this kind of skill. The interaction in the main office is a vital part of the comprehensive program.

Another important aspect of the program is the activities program run by the CSS Activities Therapist. The weekly groups are cooking, sewing, art, singing, music appreciation, poetry and laundry. There are also frequent outings to places of interest such as movies, museums, book stores and the local swimming pool during the summer. Groups are targeted to improve tenants' basic skills and daily functioning.

Although all activities are optional and tenants may attend whichever they choose whenever they occur, it is apparent that the mere availability and visibility of the groups help to encourage interest among tenants. It is the combination of some structured activities with a certain looseness and flexibility which creates an alive but relatively stable environment.

The weekend time without staff on hand is also important for the tenants. This time enables them to provide better for themselves by practicing the skills they have learned during the week. Long weekends without structured time can be stressful for all of us. Three day weekends are particularly stressful for tenants. This is manifested by the deluge of questions and requests experienced by the staff upon returning to work after a three day weekend.

Activity groups are also another arena where the CSS staff's keen sensitivity to and tolerance of tenants' fragile emotional conditions are evident. This communication of feeling provides the foundation for the development of the tenants' own sense of community and empathy for each other which is ultimately the essential quality that makes the St. Francis program effective. For example, among the most important weekly activities is the tenants' council meeting. A priest and a CSS Activities Therapist participate in the weekly tenants' council meetings as indicated above. The following events took place at one recent tenants' council meeting. *

Father T. and about ten tenants gathered around a table in the lounge. Several tenants sat on the far side of the room with other tenants walking in and out. Father T. and a tenant who was Council chairperson for the week requested that items be submitted for the agenda. The items submitted covered planning of evening and weekend activities. Next on the agenda was the desk manager who requested complaints about the building.

* Names and events have been altered slightly to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

There was no response. From the start of the meeting, there was one tenant present who had caused staff some concern earlier in the day. Staff was worried that she was decompensating and might require psychiatric hospitalization. During the meeting, Ms. Kay had trouble controlling herself. She interrupted other people and, in a manner of speaking, went off on a tangent about matters not related to the discussion at hand. Some of the tenants were clearly having trouble tolerating her behavior and quietly left the room. It was difficult to discuss the original agenda of the meeting. The hidden agenda was to support Ms. Kay by trying to calm her down. Her openly psychotic behavior took precedence over anything else. One tenant expressed his concern for Ms. Kay by asking how another hospitalized tenant was doing. There was open acknowledgement that Ms. Kay was ill and required extra attention. The meeting was then called to an end by the tenant chairperson.

Within the next few days Ms. Kay required hospitalization and was admitted to Bellevue Hospital Center. Because of the liaison with the Bellevue Department of Psychiatry, most of the admitting papers were filled out at the St. Francis by the Bellevue residents. When at all possible, a St. Francis staff member will accompany tenants to Bellevue. The acute episodes of psychotic illnesses usually occur over a period of time ranging from a few days to a few weeks. At times there may be a clear precipitant to the episode such as refusal of medication; at other times there may be none. Everything possible is done to prevent tenants from being hospitalized, including adjusting medication and providing additional support. The St. Francis staff understands that, due to the inherent nature of chronic mental illness, brief hospitalizations may be necessary to get people over acute episodes and restore them to their previous levels of functioning. Tenants' rooms are always kept for them until they return from the Hospital. Tenants are reassured that this is program policy. It is certainly helpful for tenants to know that they will return to their home when they are better. Only on very rare occasions are tenants not permitted to return to the St. Francis. This may happen when the tenants' physical condition has deteriorated to the point where they require a different level of care, such as that provided in a nursing home.

MEDICAL CARE

Plans are currently in progress to establish a written agreement with Bellevue Hospital Center which will provide for doctors and nurse practitioners to do physical assessments and screenings of St. Francis tenants. The plan provides for continuity of care by having the same practitioner be responsible for tenants' care should hospitalization for medical reasons be necessary. Currently, known medical problems are

monitored by the CSS nurse. Tenants are helped to keep appointments at the various medical clinics they attend. For the time being, tenants requiring inpatient medical care are usually referred to Cabrini Medical Center or to Bellevue Hospital Center.

STAFF MEETINGS

There is a weekly staff meeting attended by administrative staff from St. Francis Friends of the Poor, Inc., the St. Francis Program Director, the CSS team, the Project Coordinator from CIS-HRA, Bellevue Activities Therapy Director and the Social Worker from Manhattan Psychiatric Center.

This meeting contributes significantly to the solid working relationships staff members share with each other which is necessary for this kind of collaborative work. The meetings are structured yet informal. Chairpersons and recorders of minutes rotate on a weekly basis. Anyone can submit items for the agenda of the meeting. The first piece of business at each following meeting is a summary or continuation of items from the prior week's meeting. This ensures follow-up and continuity of agenda items from week to week.

The purpose of the meetings is to discuss any issues related to the St. Francis Residence and to discuss tenants' presenting problems. These problems may be related to areas such as psychotic symptomatology, refusing to take medication and refusal to participate in activities. The discussions revolve around an assessment of an individual tenant's situation and a plan of action for dealing with it. This might result in a tenant being referred to the psychiatrist for a differential diagnosis, a change in medication or increasing time spent in a specific activity.

TENANTS' REACTION TO THE ST. FRANCIS

Several tenants were eager to talk about their lives while others were less able or willing. A 33 year old man with a history of several hospitalizations was quite articulate when asked about the St. Francis. He said that he feels accepted, secure, and protected there. He likes the freedom to come and go as he pleases. He feels that he is being treated as an adult now, not like a child, as he had experienced in previous hospitalizations.

Other tenants commented upon how much they like the staff. On one occasion when a staff member had been out sick, several tenants inquired about his condition and asked when he would return to work. Several tenants clearly take pride in the uniqueness of their rooms and are eager to show them off.

WORK PROGRAM

Some tenants, as part of a small scale work program, are paid small stipends for certain activities. Work activities include preparing breakfast and lunch as part of the food program, organizing evening lounge activities and running errands necessary for the operation of the St. Francis. For tenants who are able, this work program provides a structure through which tenants can take on responsibility and earn extra money.

RECORDING OF TENANT ACTIVITY

Any discussion of a comprehensive program should include an examination of its shortcomings.

The weaknesses of the St. Francis program should be considered in the context of the strengths of the overall program. One of the areas in which the St. Francis could be strengthened is in the documentation of medical and psychiatric histories as well as the mental status examinations in the tenants' charts. The current negotiations with Bellevue which will lead to the implementation of on-site medical staff should result in complete physical assessments which will be documented in the charts.

Another area needing improvement is the recording of contacts with clients. This is currently in the process of being remedied.

STAFF REACTIONS TO THE ST. FRANCIS RESIDENCE

Staff members articulately discuss their reasons for enjoying their jobs. They derive professional and personal satisfaction from their holistic approach to tenant care. It is an integrated system unlike that of an outpatient day hospital setting where staff does not have access to all the resources it needs to provide comprehensive care to its clients. Because of the nature of the Residence, it is not encumbered by all the rules and regulations of a hospital or clinic setting. Staff is able to create a non-pressured and flexible environment for tenants and staff alike. Staff members are very fond of one another and exhibit a tremendous amount of respect for one another's area of expertise. They are willing to step out of their own disciplines and help each other. Staff members are very fond of the tenants and take great pride in the forward strides tenants have made over the years. This includes the recognition that it can take many months and years to see any change in tenants' behaviors. They are acutely aware of the time required for basic trust to be established. Because of the permanence of the Residence, there are no time limits within which someone must show improvement or otherwise be transferred to another program.

For all of these reasons staff members remain involved, committed, and satisfied with their work at the St. Francis.

SUMMARY

The St. Francis Residence is a unique living environment. It integrates the two most important aspects of life for individuals who live there. It is a permanent home and a place where their multiple needs are met. The fact that their home is permanent contributes to a feeling of being anchored.

Most people, and especially this population whose connections to places and people have been so fragmented, need to experience this form of permanency. Needs are met by number of dedicated individuals from different host agencies who offer recreational, psycho-social, and medical care on a consistent basis. Again, it is the trust that evolves over time as tenants see that staff cares about them and can help them with all sorts of problems that adds to their feelings of security. The staff members' assessments of the tenants' capacities for growth are realistic. This diminishes tenants' anxieties because they feel accepted for who they are .

The Community Support Systems team is an invaluable component of the overall service program. Of the 104 tenants, 57 are CSS eligible based on prior hospitalizations and functional disability. CSS staff works with all tenants providing care and support regardless of their CSS eligibility. A significant proportion of the non-CSS tenants are psychiatrically disabled but there are others whose primary problem is substance abuse. It would be ethically unconscionable for CSS staff not to serve non-CSS tenants in this kind of setting. Another major reason is that many non-CSS tenants are functionally disabled although they may not meet the prior hospitalization criteria. This is perfectly illustrated by a tenant currently living at the Aberdeen. He is a male in his 20's who the CSS nurse clinician regularly assesses during her weekly visit to the Aberdeen. He answered her knock on his door, and he was obviously anxious and upset. He had trouble speaking in coherent sentences. The nurse clinician thought that he had also lost several pounds and was not eating properly. He had refused previous suggestions that he see the CSS psychiatrist. There was no question that this young man was functionally disabled and in need of CSS services.

Though a systematic analysis has not been completed, only six tenants have been hospitalized for psychiatric reasons during the past year. Of those six, only two or three have had more than one rehospitalization. It is the consensus of the staff that this number is low when compared to other community based settings housing a similar population.

Because the St. Francis Residence integrates a service program with a permanent home, it meets its goals and objectives by diminishing the need for rehospitalization and providing humane and dignified services successfully.

REPLICATION OF THE ST. FRANCIS MODEL

Since the St. Francis is an effective program, many people in the mental health and social welfare field favor the replication of the St. Francis Residence. Any attempt to replicate the St. Francis must take certain factors into consideration.

INTERVIEW NO. 3
Administrative Personnel-Shelter
By
Gigi Branch

THE JERICHO PROJECT
306 West 94th Street
New York, New York 10025
Sara Wolf-Social Services Director
The Project Construction Company, Inc.
Paul Seldon, Director - 212-369-1372

The Jericho Project located on the upper West Side is a good example of SRO's. The Project is actually two separate projects under one: the Social Services Division and a Construction Company. Sara Wolf is the director of the Social Services section which includes the hotel on 94th Street and Paul Seldon is in charge of the construction company which is involved with acquisition of property to be renovated into possible SRO's.

The hotel on 94th St. has occupancy for 40 men and women whose rent ranges from \$190.00 to \$280.00 monthly and there is no limitation on the length of stay. This particular building is not owned by the project, therefore the program acts as the agent between the occupants and the hotel's owners. According to Sara Wolf "the program provides more than a roof over the heads of the participants. Our project is a residential and job training program which aids in reintegrating the people back into the socio-economic mainstream." All the participants work or attend school. One very important element is that the participants are directly involved in the organization and implementation of Jericho's programs. Everyone works on some part of the project including a board made up of participants to screen all incoming applicants to make decisions regarding any participants in the program.

The project deals strictly with housing and employment but other problems are attended to. In situations dealing with drug/alcohol/character/mental illness the participants are referred to outside centers for the proper attention.

The Jericho Project is privately funded from foundations. They are also involved in a construction business, the Project Construction Company, Inc. (of which a portion of the project's participants are employed). The company owns property in the upper West Side which is in the process of being renovated. In speaking with Paul Seldon, the company's director, I learned of the specific properties which need to be renovated.

1. A building on 121st St. and 7th Ave. is a possible 50 room building. The structure is 4 stories with the 1st floor being commercial. It has a Class B rating. Mr. Seldon has submitted his proposal to the State but has not yet learned of its statutes.
2. On 120th St. there is a structure which has plans to be a possible clubhouse with 2 1/2 floors of community space

INTERVIEW NO. 4
Administrative Personnel-Shelters
By
Jean-Francois Blassel

HEAVENLY REST SHELTER
2 East 90th Street
New York, New York 10128
212-289-3400

Heavenly Rest Church, located on Fifth Avenue between the Cooper-Hewitt Museum and the National Academy of Design, operates and funds a small night shelter. Every evening except on week-ends, the screening center operated by the Moravian Church buses up eleven homeless men and women to the shelter. Cots are installed in the church lobby, a space roughly sixty by fifteen feet, with heavy Neo-Gothic stone vaulted ceilings and massive wood doors to Fifth Avenue. The shelter supplies a dinner snack, a place to sleep, a breakfast and some food for the day; there is no shower or storage for personal belongings. By 7:00 A.M., the homeless are out of the church, back on buses to the screening center, and the cots have been put away. Eighty volunteers from the parish take turns in pairs to spend the night in the shelter. The police have been called upon occasions to calm "unruly behavior", but the interaction between the homeless and their Upper East Side hosts is reportedly good. Nevertheless, the lack of outreach in the neighborhood--the shelter does not accept people off the streets--and the limited range of the services offered by the shelters are linked to the all-volunteers nature of the staff.

Reverend Jane Henderson with whom I talked is the priest in charge of the shelter. She acknowledged and explained the limitations of the shelter in its present state but questioned whether a church is the most appropriate place to provide the wide range of services needed in a larger facility. She emphasized the dignity and hospitality the homeless need and deserve are more easily attained in smaller shelters. If subsidies became available, they would be devoted primarily to improving quality (comfort and volunteer training) rather than scope. She stressed that the shelters should be kept transitional and not turned into permanent homes. In her experience, most homeless do struggle to get back into the mainstream and succeed when welfare money, training programs and jobs are made accessible to them. The mentally or physically impaired should be housed in small homes, cared for by trained social workers and integrated in a receptive community. She refuses to believe anyone would choose homelessness voluntarily; instead, she stressed the lack of jobs and affordable housing as causes of the increasing number of homeless in the city. She sees potential solutions stemming from an understanding of the economic nature of the causes, but warned against overintellectualizing it and losing sight of the cruelty and inhumanity of its physical consequences.

and 1 or 2 floors to be turned into SROs.

3. In a proposal to the City, they have submitted the plans to turn a multi-family dwelling on Morningside Ave. into SROs.

Regarding the hotel on 94th St. there is a limit to the renovation since the hotel is not owned by the Project. The occupants have done quite a bit of work including paintings on the wall of the community room. However, Sara did say that they could use some work in the office area.

Both Sara and Paul were very helpful in describing their project and very open to suggestions, especially concerning the proposed shelters. They said they would be glad to explain any further details or questions on the program.

In her description of the project, Sara stated "we are not a shelter, we are a support network for people. Homelessness is caused by a housing shortage, and for many of our participants a home doesn't necessarily solve the problem".

INTERVIEW NO. 5
Administrative Personnel-Shelter
By
Barbara Yoshida

ST. ATHANASIUS CHURCH
878 Tiffany Street
Bronx, New York 10459
212-328-2558
Reverend Gerald E. Murray, Jr., Director

Shelter for men only, usually 14 men each night. Night sleep only, from 9:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. Shelter in existence about two years. Located in a building which was formerly Longwood Avenue School. City agencies occupy the rest of the building. Average age of residents is between 35 and 40. No limit to the length of stay. No mail service for residents. At first, shelter was open five days a week, and it was decided to open seven days a week partly because five days a week doesn't count as a residence; however, no arrangements have been made for mail to be received there. There is a hospital nearby for emergencies. No incidents of a medical or psychological nature could be recalled by Father Murray. The City provides linen service.

During the past year, the shelter had a contract with City Volunteer Corps, which provided two or three young volunteers who stayed all night, only during the week. (In exchange, the volunteers received deduction toward college expenses.) The volunteers were not always reliable. The man who is in charge of the shelter at present is one of the residents. He has an outside job, and is not paid by the City or the Parish. He also has an assistant, who is not paid. If there are any cases of violence, or potential violence, Andreas simply throws them out. He is quite strict, and the shelter runs very smoothly. Most of the residents are regulars. The population is roughly half black, half Hispanic.

The residents are selected by a City official at the men's shelter on the Bowery each night. They are transported by bus to the Bronx for the night, and returned by bus in the morning to the Bowery. They receive breakfast, lunch, and dinner at the men's shelter in Manhattan. This shelter also provides showers, de-licing, detoxification, drug rehabilitation, etc. One of the residents, Carlos, attributed the fact that they have no disciplinary problems or fights to the way Andreas handles things, and also he said, "To the churches, they send the best men".

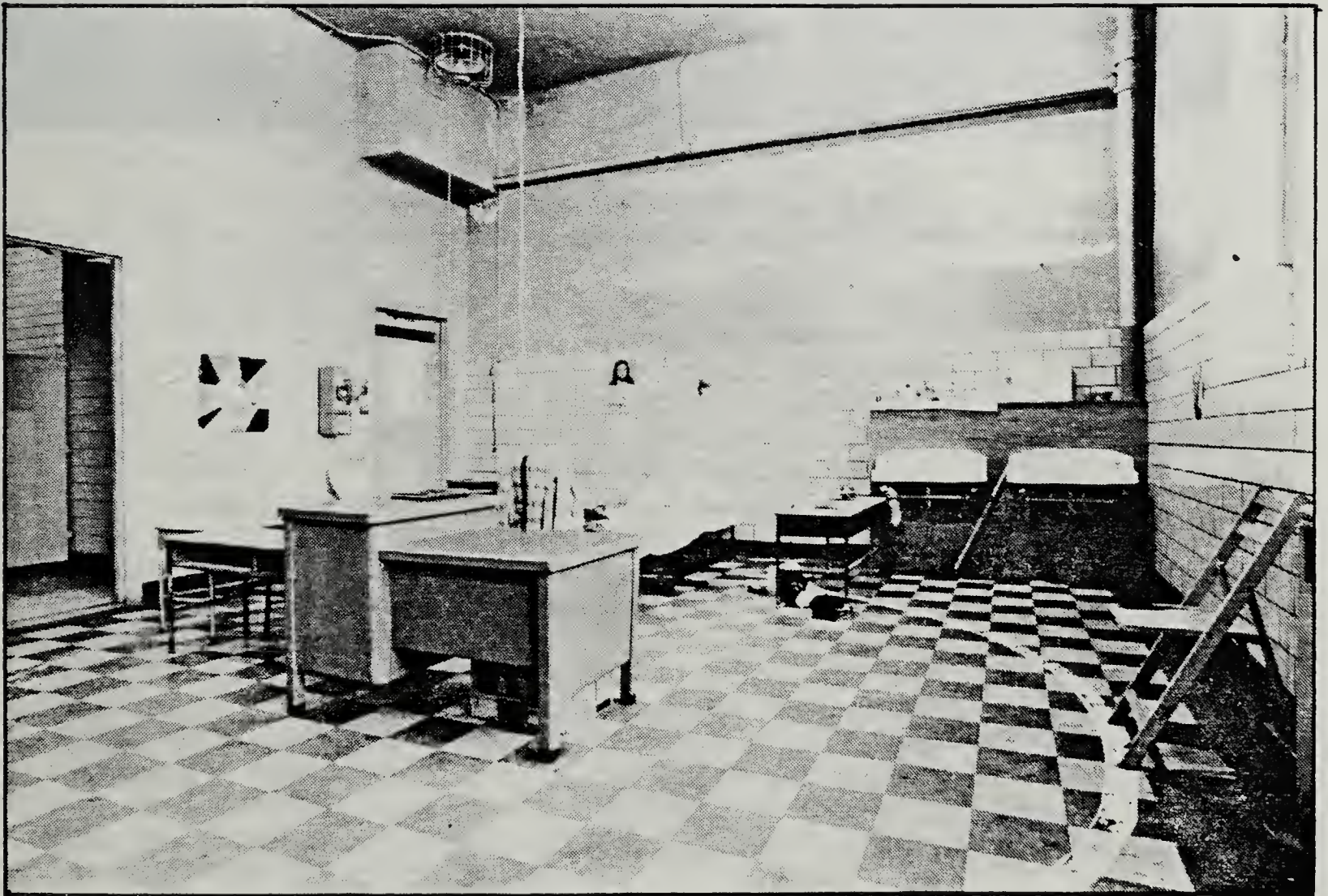
Father Murray and Carlos said that the residents have talked about painting the shelter themselves. Someone from the Church has talked about installing a shower. Other than that, they have not given much thought to improvements. We talked about privacy screens, or possibility expanding into other sections now occupied by City agencies, so that small rooms could be built. We talked about a kitchenette, a laundry room, a game/recreation area, private lockers, individual lights by each bed so the men could read if they wanted, and improvements in the bathroom (e.g., at the moment, there is no mirror). On the same floor as the room which the shelter occupies, separated by a security gate, there is a large area currently being

used by the City for "maintenance",--storing supplies, light bulbs, etc.--which is a possibility for expansion architecturally. On the other side of the room which the shelter occupies, through closed double doors, there is an amphitheater which is in disrepair and seems not to be in use. There are leaks in the ceiling above it, according to Carlos. Perhaps, if renovated, films could be shown here. (Andreas was not at the shelter during my visit, so his recommendations are not known.)

Father Murray said that he is definitely interested in working with an architect or artist about the shelter, and would be willing to speak to Mr. Lockhon (NYC Housing Authority?) about expanding into other areas in the building currently being used by City agencies. He also assured me that he would write a statement for Design Package II. I promised to send him some information about STOREFRONT and about the exhibition.

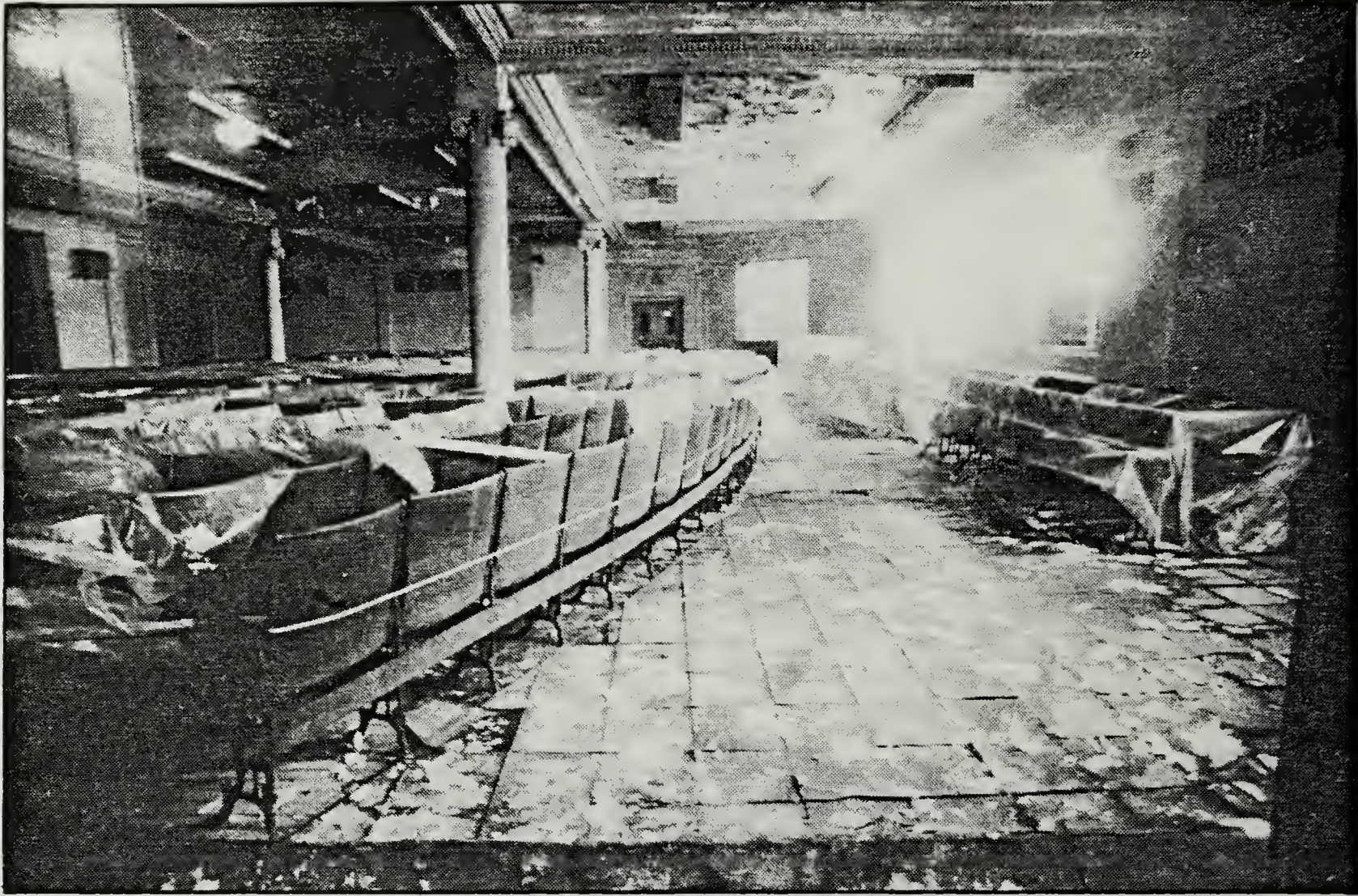
RECOMMENDATIONS: This shelter has excellent potential for being renovated creatively, if the City agrees to cooperate and give up some of the space it occupies in the building. It is a smoothly running shelter, and could conceivably become a model facility.

ST. ATHANASIUS CHURCH SHELTER
Bronx, New York



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ST. ATHANASIUS CHURCH SHELTER
Bronx, New York



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INTERVIEW NO. 6
Administrative Personnel-Shelters
By
Gigi Branch

THE HOLY TRINITY EPISCOPAL SHELTER
E. 88th Street (Between 1st and 2nd Avenues)
New York, New York 10028
212-210-4188
Barbara Nellist, Director

The Holy Trinity Shelter is a weekend shelter housed in the Church basement. Open Friday night through Monday morning, the shelter works in conjunction with the Moravian Coffee Pot to provide shelter for 19 men and women over the age of 21. The Moravian Center sends hundreds of homeless people to different shelters throughout the city; the participants are bused to the different shelters at 8:00 P.M. each evening and picked up at 7:00 A.M. each morning.

Holy Trinity has been involved with this project since February 18, 1985 when the Church voted to use its basement as a temporary shelter. The director, Barbara Nellist, has been with the program since its beginning. The basement space is also used for Church functions and as a food handout shelter known as the Pantry. The Pantry is organized by 20 local churches and gives groceries two times a week to 250 families a month and also provides a soup kitchen.

The staff at the Holy Trinity are all volunteers including the director. The night of the interview, there were three staff members present: an electrician, an office clerk, and a hospital attendant. The shelter tries to maintain at least two staff members at one time for security reasons; however, Barbara said the problem with an all volunteer staff is that they are ongoing and are many times unreliable. In general, she finds that people do not feel comfortable with shelter work because they feel that "Homelessness" is a result of a psychological sickness of which they do not wish to be exposed.

Although the people may vary from week to week, many of the people are regulars. They were males and females varying in age from 40 to 55. Barbara said they seldom turn people away but a few times they have due to a disruptive appearance. The participants spend their days at the Moravian Center, libraries, parks, and soup kitchens. Barbara said a few of them were employed but did not make enough to house themselves.

The shelter is limited in what it can offer its occupants. They are given a meal in the evening and a bed which is provided by the City. They do not have shower facilities. Columbia University is offering a First Aid Class for the staff and there is a hospital nearby for emergencies. However, Barbara said that they have rarely needed to use it. The Church also offers a clothing bank which has clothing donated from the Church members.

The program is funded mainly by Federal Grants which are applied for by the Partnership. They also receive laundry service from the City which picks up and delivers bed linens weekly. However, the shelter is in great need of money and manpower. When speaking to Barbara regarding renovation of the space, she said their main problem

involved the multi-use of the room. Because it is used by so many different people for so many different functions, it is very difficult to keep clean and organized. She felt they were in desperate need of storage space especially for the 19 beds. They could also use shower facilities, a washer and dryer, a box for the linen, a telephone, etc. The shelter is in need of many things, but Barbara said they did the best they could do to provide a warm safe place where one can rest.

Following is a set of qualitative and quantitative criteria for the design of shelters. Also included are plans for a small model facility presently under construction. In terms of areas, quality and variety of services, these criteria are probably as generous as one could expect in 1985 (economically feasible and culturally acceptable). This information could allow one to develop a building program conforming to today's conditions; it could also be a point of departure and a reflection of the qualitative gap separating the best intentioned projects from Home.

VI



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BASES FOR A PROGRAM

CONRAD LEVENSON
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July 1, 1985

OBJECTIVES AND CRITERIA FOR THE DESIGN OF HOMES FOR THE HOMELESS

In city after city, the homeless are gathered from the streets, bussed to gymnasiums, armories and church basements for a night's sleep in spaces jammed with cots. In the morning they are returned to the streets again, to wander in search of warmth, food or a public bathroom until evening comes again. It is now clear that the homeless population is growing and that the long term housing solution will not come next winter or in the winters that will soon follow. Quality shelter must be provided. Model programs and buildings offering individuals food and bed in dignified secure settings must be created.

In the design of homes for the homeless, the first issue to be addressed is the identification of the target population. Homelessness afflicts a diverse cross section of the general population - the young, the elderly, intact families, individuals, the physically and mentally disabled, victims of domestic violence and the substance addicted. These various sub-groups share the general urgent need for food and shelter but each has its own specific and distinct needs which must be addressed.

The second issue is the type and duration of shelter required by the target population. There are three basic levels of shelter which apply to all of the target populations. The first is Emergency Shelter. This type provides for basic bed, food and clothing in a supervised, secure and sanitary setting. It further provides the homeless with a legal address where they can receive mail and be eligible to receive social service entitlement benefits.

The second level of shelter is Interim Supported Housing. This type consists primarily of shared accommodations in an atmosphere of mutual support, social services and minimal oversight and supervision. There are usually common facilities including kitchen, dining room, lounge, laundry, community/child care room and storage for resident possessions.

The third level of Shelter consists of Permanent Housing with on-site or off-site support services as may be required by the target population. This last level of shelter most nearly resembles conventional housing accommodations with the specific design objective of fostering mutual support and positive interaction among the residents.

Interim Housing is more like permanent housing than Emergency Shelter and usually has a limit of stay from three to six months. Of course, interim housing can only be temporary if an adequate supply of permanent housing is made available to the homeless population. Furthermore, there will always be a portion of the population that will be unable to graduate to independent living and will require supported housing on a permanent basis.

Emergency Shelter is that form of housing which least resembles conventional housing and has few if any existing models to emulate. In the design of Emergency Shelter there are a variety of possible options and configurations. In this regard, the philosophy, program and experience of the specific sponsor/shelter provider will exert a strong influence on the design.

The proposed design will have to reconcile the needs of the guests with those of the shelter provider and the requirements of day time centers with those of overnight sleeping accommodations. It will have to achieve a critical balance between size and scale. The overall size of the shelter will make it economically feasible to make available the broadest range of social services. On the other hand, the shelter should also be divided into overnight shelter units for guests, the scale of which gives the units separate identities and fosters positive socialization among the guests and personal contacts and relationships between the guests and the staff. This is critically important because it will lower the level of frustration and hostility of the guests and therefore violent behavior. It will reduce the amount of physical abuse and damage to the building. It will also change the nature and reduce the amount of surveillance and supervision of guests on the part of the staff.

Overnight guests should be permitted to return each evening to the same overnight shelter unit and the same personal space with personal lighting and lockable storage. These spaces must be designed to emphasize personal dignity, privacy and security and provide opportunities for the restoration of individual dignity and the personalization of space which homeless people desperately need. Each individual guest should have at least the psychological essentials, if not the comfort of a home. It may be a long time before many shelter residents are able to establish sufficient independence to graduate to the next levels of shelter.

The sleeping spaces should be arranged in a simple pattern designed to identify and clarify for the guests the circulation patterns linking the major shelter unit elements which should be organized in the same basic relationship in each shelter unit. Color coding and lighting

design can further enhance the organizational clarity. This arrangement will substantially mitigate the disorientation and confusion which result from placing large numbers of homeless people in anonymous and dehumanizing settings similar to armories, gymnasiums, and other like spaces. Those kinds of undifferentiated sleeping spaces only perpetuate the disorientation and paranoia which pervades the lives of the homeless on the streets, affords individuals no privacy and security and precludes the separation and grouping of guests based upon specific needs.

Finally, any shelter design must provide for the critical and essential separation of men and women - at the entrances and within both the Drop-In Centers and Overnight Shelters. Failure to provide this separation will promote unrest and violence among the guests, particularly threatening the dignity and safety of the women. Consequently, guests will live in fear or simply stay away as a result of justified fears of physical and psychological abuse.

A thoughtful and caring approach to the design of homes for the homeless will provide valuable information to social service and housing agencies around the country. These concepts and designs should offer both symbolic and concrete inspiration to all who care about and are grappling with the problems and fate of the homeless everywhere.

CITY COLLEGE ARCHITECTURAL CENTER

CCNY SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES.
CONVENT AVE & 138th ST., N.Y., NY 10031 690-6751

CCAC DESIGN STUDIO
ARCH. 481 - PROFESSORS FEIGENBERG & LEVENSON
SPRING 1985

SHELTER AND HOUSING FOR THE HOMELESS

PROGRAM OF REQUIREMENTS

I. EMERGENCY FACILITIES

A. DROP-IN-CENTER (MEN)

(200 people x 20 sq.ft./person)	4,000 sq.ft.
1. Clothing distribution room (20x30 + storage 15x20)	900 sq.ft.
2. 4 showers/8 w.c./4 urin/ 8 lavs (24 fixts x 15 sq.ft./fixt.)	360 sq.ft.
3. Staff Office (10x15)	150 sq.ft.
4. Cleaning materials and supplies (shared w/women - 20x30)	600 sq.ft.
5. Janitor's closet (5x10)	50 sq.ft.
6. Laundry (2 washers & 2 dryers) (10x20 including folding area)	200 sq.ft.
	<u>6,260 sq.ft.</u>

NOTES:

1. Uni -construction tables and chairs and continuous benches along perimeter (to accommodate 100 people) (perimeter lockers)
2. Two public telephones

B. DROP-IN-CENTER (WOMEN)

(100 people x 20 sq.ft./person)	2,000 sq.ft.
1. Clothing distribution room (15x20 + storage 10x10)	400 sq.ft.
2. 2 showers/6 w.c./ 4 lavs (12 fixts x 15 sq.ft./fixt.)	180 sq.ft.
3. Counseling room (3 stations - 20x30)	600 sq.ft.
4. Janitor's closet (5x10)	50 sq.ft.
5. Laundry (2 washers & 2 dryers) (10x20 including folding area)	200 sq.ft.
6. Staff office (15x20) (adjacent to Janitor's closet)	300 sq.ft.
7. Activity Room (20x25 inc. storage)	500 sq.ft.
8. Quiet Room (15x20)	300 sq.ft.
9. Area for vending machines (10x20)	200 sq.ft.
	<u>4,730 sq.ft.</u>

NOTES:

1. Separate entrance from street
2. Direct access to Women's Shelter
3. One public telephone
4. Direct access to Medical area
5. Uni-construction tables and chairs and continuous benches along perimeter (to accommodate 75 people). (Perimeter Lockers)
6. To be shared with women with children.

C. OVERNIGHT SHELTER UNIT: MEN

(200 persons each)

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. Lounge/dining area
(100 people @ 20 sq.ft./person) | 2,000 sq.ft. |
| 2. 17 showers/10 w.c./7 urin/17 lavs
(51 fixts @15 sq.ft./fixt) | 765 sq.ft. |
| 3. Staff office (inc. storage 10x20) | 200 sq.ft. |
| 4. Janitor's closet and supplies (10x10) | 100 sq.ft. |
| 5. Sleeping area (200 @ 80 sq.ft.). | 16,000 sq.ft. |
| 6. Provide "Holding" Rooms in Shelter Unit
for guest who refuse to take showers
and/or be deloused. (Two spaces 20x30
each with their own shared toilet with
2 lavs/2 w.c./1 shower) | 1,300 sq.ft. |
| | <hr/> 20,365 sq.ft. |

NOTES:

1. Uni-construction tables and chairs bolted to floor in dining area.
2. Access for handicapped to all facilities.
3. In dining area, triple basin sinks and space for food service carts.
4. Separate entrance and lobby with two public telephones.

D. OVERNIGHT SHELTER UNIT: WOMEN

(100 persons)

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Lounge | 700 sq.ft. |
| 2. Dining Area (50 people @ 20 sq.ft./
person) | 1,000 sq.ft. |
| 3. 6 showers (w/benches)/ 8 w.c.
6 lavs (20 fixts @ 15 sq.ft./fixt) | 300 sq.ft. |
| 4. Laundry Room with 4 laundry washtubs
clothes drying racks and benches (20x30) | 600 sq.ft. |
| 5. Janitor's Closet and supplies (10x10)
(adjacent to Staff Office) | 100 sq.ft. |
| 6. Clothing room (20x30 w/sorting area
(10x20) | 800 sq.ft. |
| 7. Counseling room (10x10) | 100 sq.ft. |
| 8. Clothing storage room for guest
possessions (20x30)(with large cubbies | 600 sq.ft. |

	and adjacent to Staff Office).	
9.	Sleeping area (100 @ 80 sq.ft. +/-	8,000 sq.ft.
10.	Staff Office (10x20 inc. storage)	200 sq.ft.
11.	Activity Room (20x25 inc. storage)	500 sq.ft.
12.	"Holding Room" for guest who refuses to take showers and/or be deloused). (5-10 people) with their own shared toilet with 2 lavs/2 w.c./1 shower.	1,000 sq.ft.
		<hr/> 13,900 sq.ft.

NOTES:

1. Separate entrance and lobby with two public telephones.
2. Direct access from women's drop-in-center.
3. In dining area, triple basin sinks and space for food service carts.
4. All activities except sleeping to be as close to the Staff Office as possible.
5. Uni-construction tables and chairs and perimeter benches in dining area bolted to floor (50 people).
6. Provide area within lounge for vending machines.
7. Access for handicapped to all facilities.

E. OVERNIGHT SHELTER UNIT: WOMEN WITH CHILDREN

1.	Lounge	600 sq.ft.
2.	Dining Area	1,200 sq.ft.
3.	(60 people @ 20 sq.ft./ person) 2 showers (w/benches) 3 tubs/6 w.c./ 3 lavs (14 fixts @ 15 sq.ft./fixt)	210 sq.ft.
4.	Laundry Room with 2 laundry wash tubs, 2 wash machines, 2 dryers, clothes drying racks and benches (20x30).	600 sq.ft.
5.	Janitor's Closet and supplies (10x10) (adjacent to Staff Office)	100 sq.ft.
6.	Clothing Room (20x20 w/sorting area 10x10)	500 sq.ft.
7.	Counseling Room (10x10)	100 sq.ft.
8.	Clothing storage rooms for guest possessions (20x20) (with large cubbies and adjacent to Staff Office)	400 sq.ft.
9.	Sleeping Rooms (15 @ 10x20 with 2 bunkbeds each room and 1 lavatory each room)	3,000 sq.ft.
10.	Staff Office (10x20 inc. storage)	200 sq.ft.
11.	Children's Activity/Play Room (10x30 inc. storage)	300 sq.ft.
		<hr/> 7,210 sq.ft.

NOTES:

1. Shared entrance and lobby with women's overnight shelter.
2. Direct access from women's drop-in-center.
3. In dining area, triple basin sinks and space for food service carts.
4. All activities except sleeping to be as close to the

- Staff Office as possible.
5. Uni-construction tables and chairs and perimeter benches in dining area bolted to floor (50 people).
 6. Provide area within lounge for vending machines.
 7. Access for handicapped to all facilities.

F. STAFF AREA

1. Sleeping rooms (inc. closets - 15 singles @ 10x12 and 10 doubles @ 10x20)	3,800 sq.ft.
2. Kitchen (w/eating area - 20x30)	600 sq.ft.
3. TV/lounge area (20x40)	800 sq.ft.
4. Quiet room (10x20)	200 sq.ft.
5. Office (inc. storage - 10x20)	200 sq.ft.
6. Men's toilets with 2 showers/ 2 w.c./ 2 lavs (6 fixts @ 15 sq.ft./fixt)	90 sq.ft.
7. Women's toilets with 2 showers/ 3 w.c./ 3 lavs (8 fixts @ 15 sq.ft. fixt.)	120 sq.ft.
8. Janitor's closet (5x10)	50 sq.ft.
9. Laundry room with 1 washer/1 dryer/ 1 laundry sink (15x20)	300 sq.ft.
	<hr/> 6,160 sq.ft.

G. OFFICES

1. Employment (10x20)	200 sq.ft.
2. Housing (10x20)	200 sq.ft.
3. Benefits (20x30)	600 sq.ft.
4. Mental Health	300 sq.ft.
5. Misc. Offices	1,000 sq.ft.
6. Toilets (2 @ 35 sq.ft.)	70 sq.ft.
	<hr/> 2,370 sq.ft.

NOTES:

1. Anticipate additional office space may be required.
2. Access to offices from both men's and women's drop-in-centers and for the public.

H. MEDICAL CLINIC

1. Toilets (2 @ 35 sq.ft.)	70 sq.ft.
2. X-ray rooms (2 @ 10x10)	200 sq.ft.
3. Large office/pharmacy (10x30)	300 sq.ft.
4. Dental Clinic (3 operatories + office (4 @ 10x10)	400 sq.ft.
5. Examining rooms (3 @ 8x10)	240 sq.ft.
6. Waiting area (10x20)	200 sq.ft.
7. Treatment rooms (primarily podiatry - 2 @ 8x10)	160 sq.ft.
8. Storage and supply room	500 sq.ft.
	<hr/> 2,070 sq.ft.

NOTES:

1. Proximate to Kitchen.
2. Separate and secure from all other areas.
3. Separate external entrance from street (no direct connection from Men's or Women's Shelters).
4. Proximate to Women's Drop-In-Center.
5. Accessible for public.

I. KITCHEN

3,000 sq.ft.

1. Walk-in refrigerators and freezers
2. Dishwashers
3. Food prep counters and tables
4. Stoves and ovens
5. Mobile food service carts
6. Receiving and deliveries
7. Dry goods storage
8. Food prep sinks
9. Utility sinks
10. Waste disposal

J. BUILDING MAINTENANCE ROOM

(Including storage - 20x40)

800 sq.ft.

K. BOILER ROOM

1,000 sq.ft.

L. LAUNDRY (for institutional linens)

(10 washers and 10 dryers) (20x30)

600 sq.ft.

M. MAJOR SUPPLIES STORAGE

1,000 sq.ft.

N. LOADING DOCK/RECEIVING

600 sq.ft.

O. PARKING

1. As required by zoning.

P. GARDENS & PLAZAS

1. Separate for each Drop-In-Center. Allow 10 sq.ft./ person in proportion to population.
2. Secured and fenced with access only from Drop-In-Center

II. INTERIM HOUSING ACCOMMODATIONS

A. INDIVIDUAL SLEEPING ROOMS FOR MEN & WOMEN

1. 30 singles @ 130 sq.ft. each (plus closets) 3,900 sq.ft.
2. 20 doubles @ 160 sq.ft. each (plus closets) 3,200 sq.ft.
3. 20 full 3 fixture baths (@ 35 sq.ft. each) 700 sq.ft.
4. Lounge Areas 800 sq.ft.

5.	Kitchen (including pantry & storage)	700 sq.ft.
6.	Dining Room (70 people @ 20 sq.ft./ person)	1,400 sq.ft.
7.	Recreation/Activity Room (including storage)	800 sq.ft.
8.	Toilets adjacent to dining and recreation areas (2 fixts each for men and women)	70 sq.ft.
9.	Laundry Room (2 washers, 2 dryers)	500 sq.ft.
10.	Staff Offices (including storage)	600 sq.ft.
11.	Janitor's closet and supplies	100 sq.ft.
		<u>12,070 sq.ft.</u>

B. SHARED ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS

1.	30 sleeping rooms in 10 suites of 3 rooms each At 130 sq.ft. (inc. closets), 1 shared bath (3 fixts) At 35 sq.ft. and 1 shared lounge at 80 sq.ft.	5,050 sq.ft.
2.	Kitchen (including pantry and storage)	500 sq.ft.
3.	Dining Room/ lounge (30 people @ 20 sq.ft./person)	600 sq.ft.
4.	Toilets adjacent to dining/lounge (2 fixts each for men and women)	70 sq.ft.
5.	Laundry (1 washer, 1 dryer)	300 sq.ft.
6.	Staff Offices (inc. storage)	600 sq.ft.
7.	Recreation/Activity Room (inc. storage)	600 sq.ft.
8.	Janitor's closet and supplies	100 sq.ft.
		<u>7,820 sq.ft.</u>

C. SHARED ACCOMMODATIONS FOR WOMEN WITH CHILDREN

1.	40 sleeping rooms in 10 suites of 4 rooms each at 130 sq.ft. (inc. closets) 2 shared baths (3 fixt) at 70 sq.ft., and 1 shared kitchenette/dining area at 150 sq.ft.	7,400 sq.ft.
2.	Kitchen (including pantry and storage)	800 sq.ft.
3.	Dining Room (30 people @ 20 sq.ft. each 60 people @ 2 sittings)	600 sq.ft.
4.	Parents Lounge	300 sq.ft.
5.	Children's Play room	300 sq.ft.
6.	Toielts (2 @ 2 fixts. ea.)	70 sq.ft.
7.	Laundry (2 washers, 2 dryers)	500 sq.ft.
8.	Staff Offices (inc. storage)	600 sq.ft.
9.	Janitor's closets and storage	100 sq.ft.
		<u>10,670 sq.ft.</u>

III. PERMANENT HOUSING

A. ROOMS FOR UNRELATED INDIVIDUALS

1. 50 sleeping rooms in 10 suites 11,790 sq.ft.
of 5 rooms each at 160 sq.ft. each
(including closets), 2 shared baths (1,179 sq.ft.
(3 fixts) at 70 sq.ft. and 1 shared per suite)
kitchenette/lounge/dining area at
250 sq.ft.

B. CONVENTIONAL APARTMENTS

1. 100 Dwelling Units* distributed as follows:

	0 BR	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR
			(2 BATHS)	(2 BATHS)	(2 BATHS)
	10	15	50	15	10
	(@500 s.f.)	(@650 s.f.)	(@800 s.f.)	(@900 s.f.)	(@1100 s.f.)
Sub	5000 s.f.	9750 s.f.	4000 s.f.	13,500 s.f.	11,000 s.f.
Tot.					43,250 sq.f.

*(5% for the handicapped - one of each size)

C. PARKING

1. As required by zoning.

D. GARDENS AND PLAZAS

1. Open space as required by zoning.
2. Separate areas for toddlers, teenagers, and the elderly.

E. COMMERCIAL SPACE

1. Allow space at ground level for service stores such as grocery, 2,000 sq.ft.
dry cleaner, pharmacy, etc.

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PROJECT

SAMARITAN HOUSE
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

SPONSOR

CHRISTIAN HELP IN PARK SLOPE (CHIPS)

PROGRAM

CONVENTIONAL FINANCING AND
PRIVATE GRANTS FOR ACQUISITION
AND REHABILITATION

DESCRIPTION

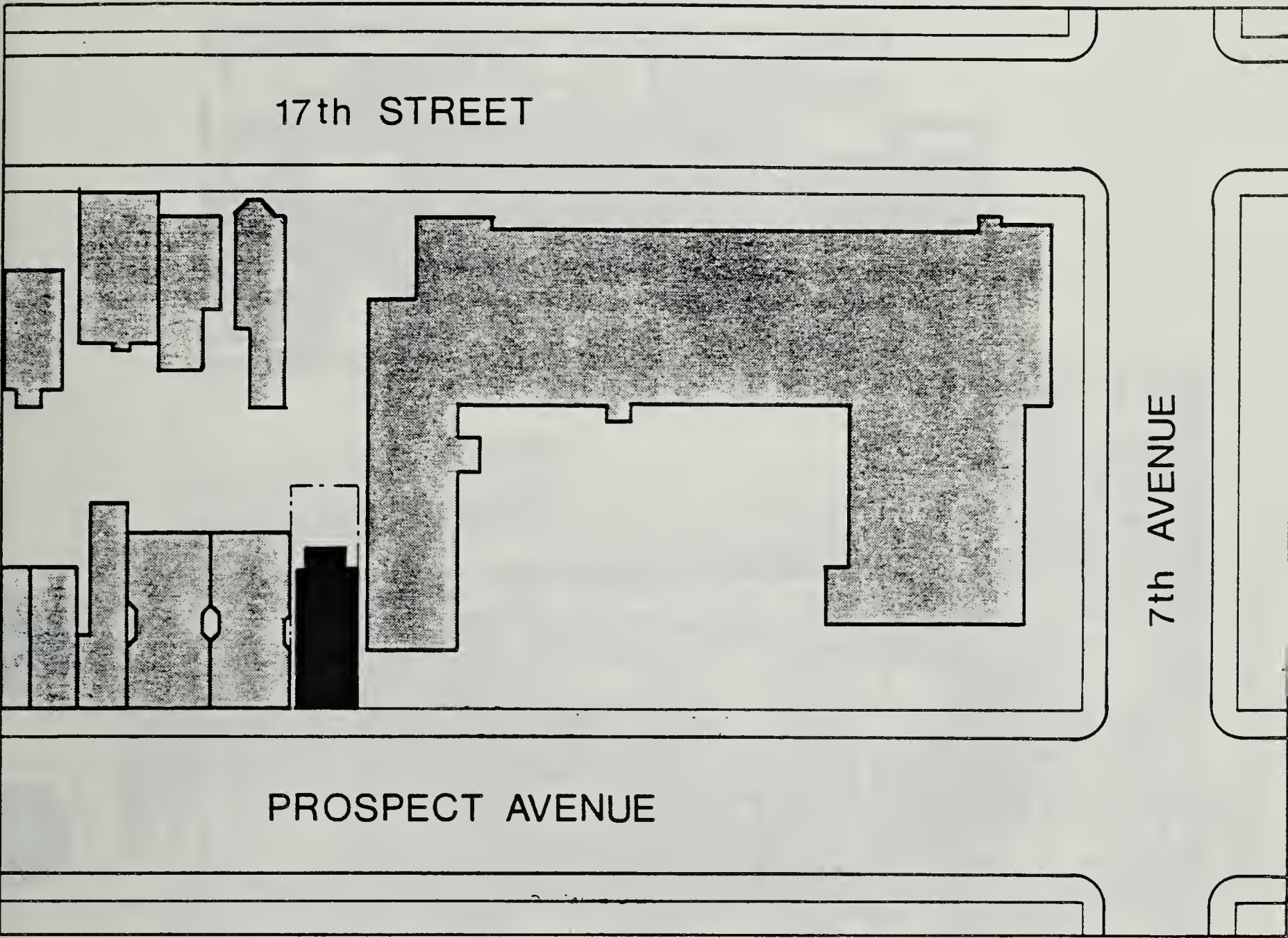
~~CONVERSION OF~~ EXISTING MULTIPLE
~~DWELLING TO~~ TRANSITIONAL RESIDENCE.
INCLUDES SLEEPING ROOMS, BATHS AND
TOILETS, STAFF QUARTERS AND OFFICES,
LAUNDRY, KITCHEN, DINING ROOM,
RECREATION ROOM AND GARDEN
10 FAMILIES

COST

\$350,000

DATE

CONSTRUCTION
1984-1985



17th STREET

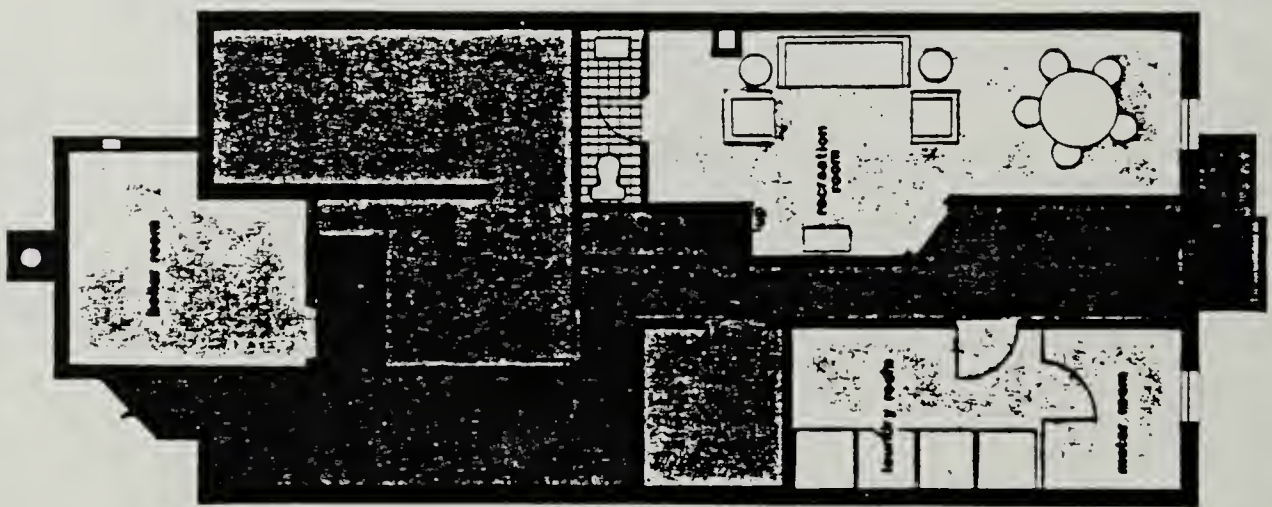
7th AVENUE

PROSPECT AVENUE

BLOCK N^o 869
LOT N^o 18



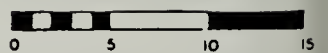
C.H.I.P.S. RESIDENCE
388 PROSPECT AVENUE BROOKLYN, NEW YORK
CHRISTIAN HELP IN PARK SLOPE



C.H.I.P.S. RESIDENCE

388 PROSPECT AVENUE BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

CHRISTIAN HELP IN PARK SLOPE



SAMARITAN HOUSE
Brooklyn, New York





The following photographs define a range of typical potential sites for projects. These examples are meant to inspire rather than limit.

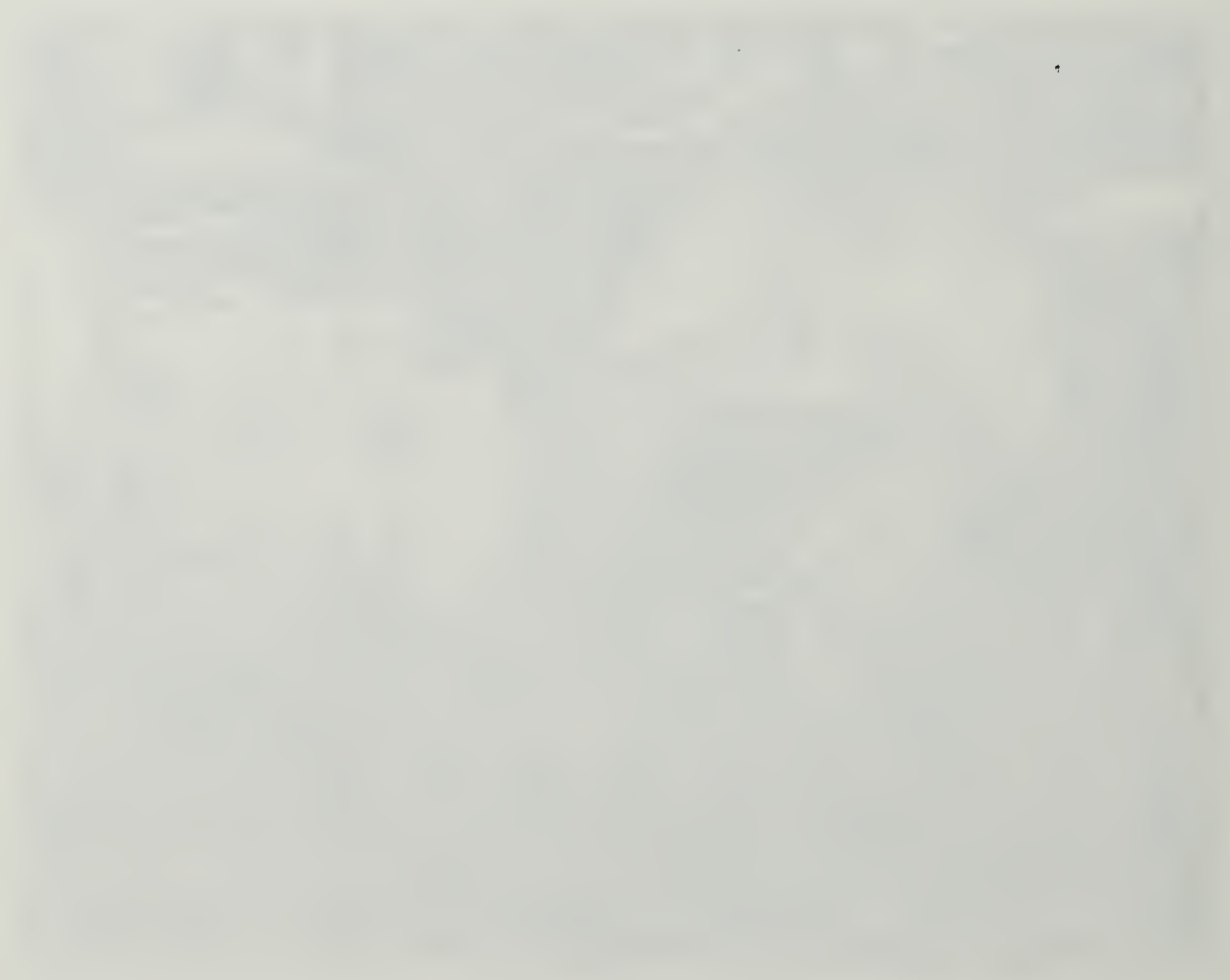
VII



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EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL SITES

1900



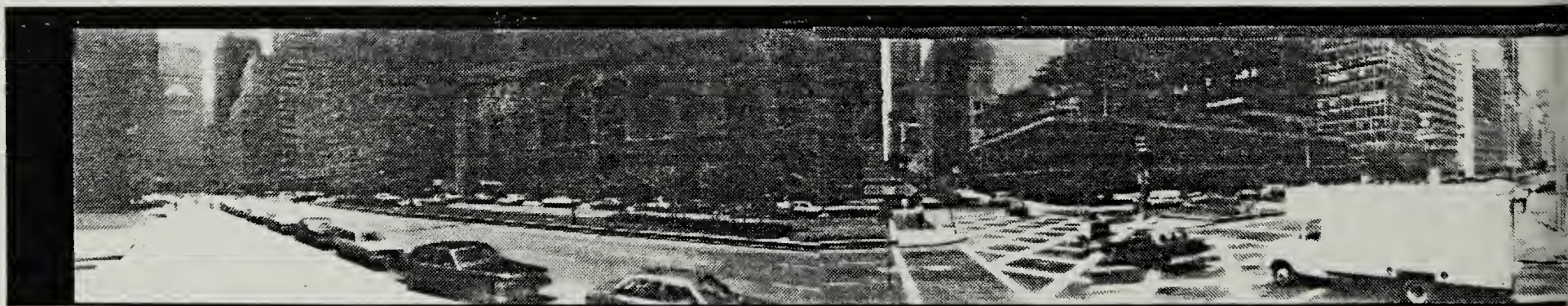
1900

1900



EXAMPLE OF BUILDING
New York City Public Auction

PLANTING STRIP
Park Avenue at 53rd Street
New York, New York



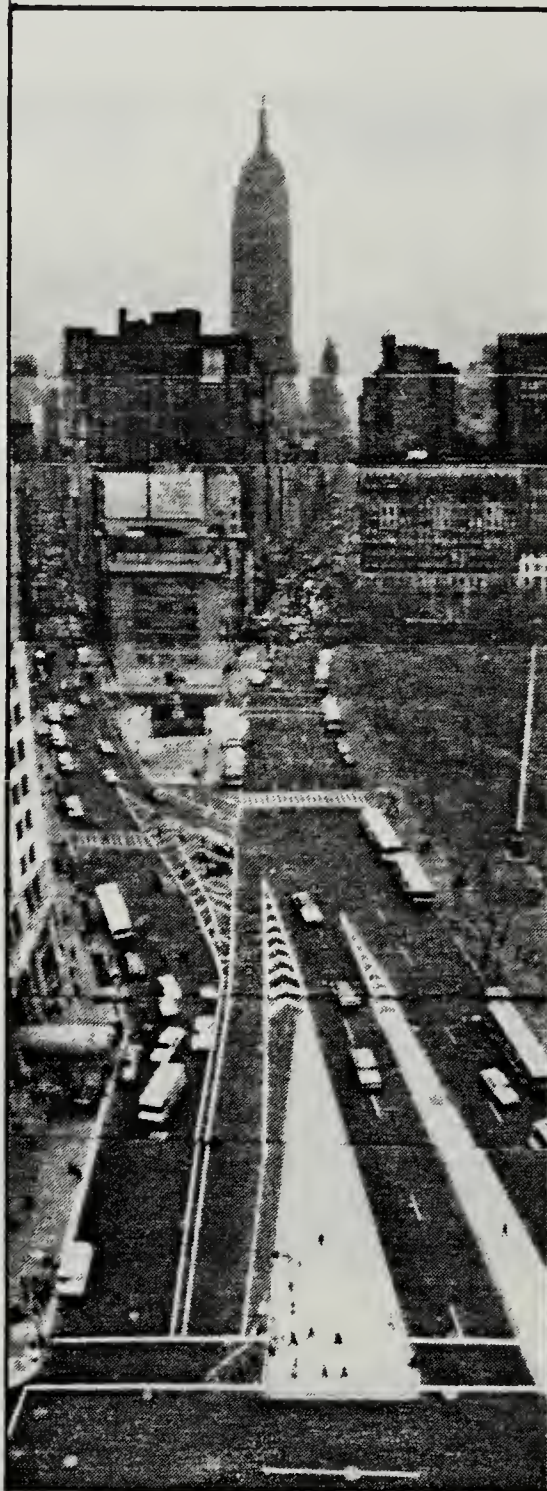
(c) Jean-Francois Blassel, 1985
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SIGN
AMERICAN RED CROSS EMERGENCY FAMILY CARE SHELTER
510 West 42nd Street
New York, New York



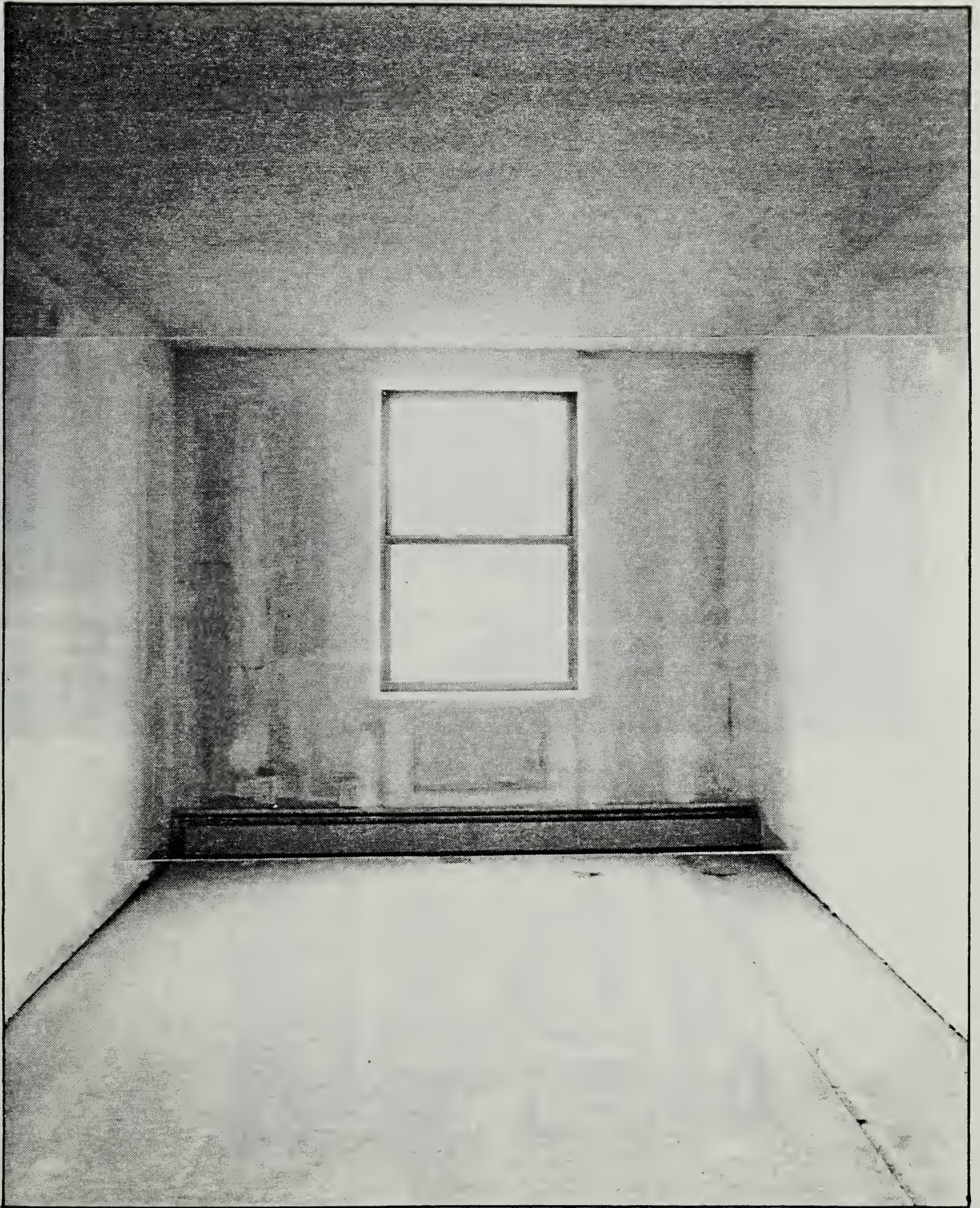
(c) Al Amateau, 1985
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TRIANGLE
Broadway, Fifth Avenue and 23rd Street
(In Front of Flatiron Building-View, North)
New York, New York



(c) Kyong Park, 1985
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EMPTY ROOM
Housing Project
New York, New York



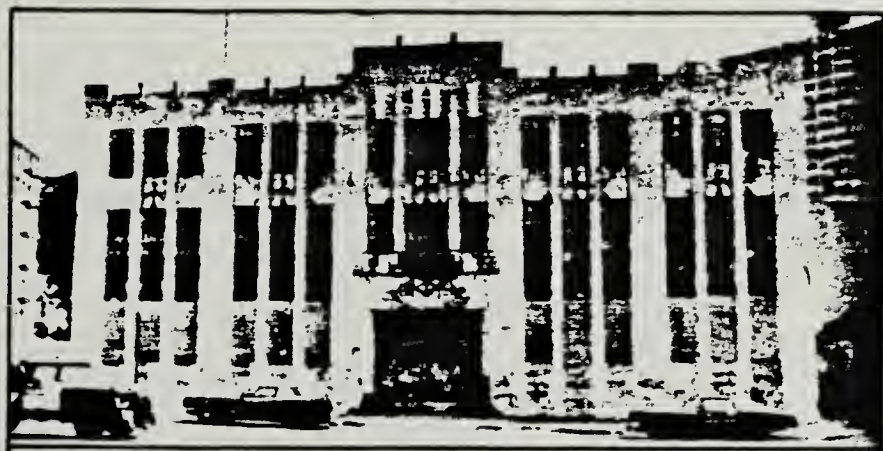
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EMPTY LOT
New York, New York



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EXAMPLES OF BUILDINGS
New York City Public Auctions



Three Story Building
2016 Bronxdale Avenue/Bronx



One Story Building
106-31 Sutphin Boulevard/Queens



Three Story Building
298 Broadway/Staten Island

*For information, contact the New York City Office of Auction Sales -
for commercial buildings, telephone 566-7550 and for residential
buildings, telephone 566-7552.

This is a very partial bibliography of material related to homelessness. There are many more resources for further research.

VIII



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